

The Complete
Little Stories for Bedtime
by
Thornton W. Burgess
1913

The Complete Little Stories for Bedtime by Thornton W. Burgess, 1913.

Edited by Peter W. Oehlkers.

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Contents

Introduction.	1
276. Unc' Billy Possum Plays a Joke	5
277. Peter Rabbit Learns His Lesson.	6
278. The First Snow.	7
279. Peter Rabbit Goes Exploring	8
280. Mrs. Grouse Puts on Snowshoes.	9
Illustrations. January 1 to January 4, 1913.	10
281. Jimmy Skunk and Billy Mink Have a Dispute.	12
282. Mrs. Grouse Goes to Bed	13
283. How a Breakfast Flew Away.	15
284. Peter Rabbit Visits the Smiling Pool.	16
285. Peter Rabbit Scares Jerry Muskrat.	17
286. Little Joe Otter Has a Good Time.	18
Illustrations. January 6 to January 11, 1913.	19
287. Peter Rabbit Gets a New Coat.	21
288. Old Roughleg's Eyes are Fooled.	22
289. How Peter Rabbit Learned to Use His New Coat.	23
290. A Great Joke on Jimmy Skunk.	24
291. Peter Rabbit and Jumper the Hare Have Adventures.	26
Illustrations. January 13 to January 18, 1913.	27
292. Peter Rabbit Learns to Sit Tight.	28
293. Jerry Muskrat at Home.	29
294. A Stranger Visits Jerry Muskrat's House.	30
295. Jerry Muskrat Fights for His Castle	32
296. Danny Meadow Mouse Plays Hide and Seek	33
297. Old Granny Fox Tries for Danny Meadow Mouse.	34
Illustrations. January 20 to January 25, 1913.	35
298. What Happened on the Green Meadows.	36
299. Danny Meadow Mouse Remembers and Reddy Fox Forgets	38
300. Old Granny Fox Tries a New Plan.	39
301. Brother North Wind Proves a Friend.	40
302. Caught at Last.	41
303. A Strange Ride and How it Ended	43
Illustrations. January 27 to February 1, 1913.	44
304. Peter Rabbit Gets a Fright.	45
305. Old Brier Patch Has a New Tenant.	46
306. Peter Rabbit Visits the Peach Orchard.	48

307. Farmer Brown Sets a Trap.	49
308. Caught in a Snare.	50
309. Peter Rabbit's Hard Journey.	51
310. Danny Meadow Mouse Becomes Worried	52
Illustrations. February 3 to February 8, 1913.	53
311. Danny Meadow Mouse Returns a Kindness.	55
312. Peter Rabbit and Danny Meadow Mouse Live High.	56
313. Peter Rabbit and Danny Meadow Mouse Entertain.	57
314. An Exciting Meeting.	58
315. Bowser the Hound Gets a Cold Bath.	60
316. Unc' Billy Possum Grows Hungry.	61
Illustrations. February 10 to February 15, 1913.	62
317. Old Mrs. Possum Grows Worried.	63
318. The Foolishness of Unc' Billy Possum.	65
319. Why Unc' Billy Possum Didn't Go Home .	66
320. Unc' Billy Possum Lies Low.	67
321. Unc' Billy Possum is a Prisoner.	68
322. What the Snow Did.	69
Illustrations. February 17 to February 22, 1913.	70
323. Unc' Billy Possum Wishes He Had Snowshoes.	72
324. Farmer Brown's Boy Chops Down a Tree.	73
325. Where Unc' Billy Possum Was.	74
326. Happy Jack Squirrel Makes an Unexpected Call.	75
327. Happy Jack Squirrel Helps Unc' Billy Possum.	77
328. Happy Jack Squirrel's Bright Idea.	78
Illustrations. February 24 to March 1, 1913.	79
329. Sammy Jay Makes a Fuss	80
330. A Bitter Disappointment.	81
331. The Vanity of Sammy Jay.	83
332. Sammy Jay Gets Even With Peter Rabbit	84
333. The First Messenger.	85
Illustrations. March 3 to March 8, 1913.	87
334. Peter Rabbit Spreads the News.	88
335. Gentle Sister South Wind Arrives.	89
336. Johnny Chuck Receives Callers.	90
337. Jimmy Skunk Sees Peter Rabbit Home	92
338. Reddy Fox Plans to Get Even with Jimmy Skunk.	93
339. Reddy Fox is Very Busy.	95
340. Peter Rabbit is Troubled	96

Illustrations. March 10 to March 15, 1913.	97
341. Billy Mink Receives a Caller.	98
342. Reddy Fox Keeps Watch	99
343. The Singers of the Smiling Pool.	101
344. Johnny Chuck Finds Out Who The Singers Are.	102
345. Peter Rabbit Makes a Discovery.	103
Illustrations. March 17 to March 22, 1913.	105
346. Hooty the Owl's Castle.	106
347. Johnny Chuck is Discontented.	107
348. Johnny Chuck Turns Tramp	109
349. Johnny Chuck's First Adventure.	110
350. Johnny Chuck Has Another Adventure.	111
351. Another Strange Chuck.	113
352. Why Johnny Chuck Didn't Fight.	114
Illustrations. March 24 to March 29, 1913.	115
353. The Greatest Thing in the World	117
354. Johnny Chuck Proves His Love	118
355. Polly and Johnny Chuck Go House Hunting.	119
356. A New Home at Last	121
357. Sammy Jay Finds the New House	122
358. Sammy Jay Plans Mischief.	123
Illustrations. March 31 to April 5, 1913.	124
359. More Mischief.	126
360. Farmer Brown's Boy Makes a Discovery.	127
361. Johnny Chuck's Pride.	129
362. Sammy Jay Understands.	130
363. Sammy Jay Has a Change of Heart.	131
Illustrations. April 7 to April 12, 1913.	133
364. Johnny Chuck is Kept Busy.	134
365. The School in the Old Orchard.	135
366. Sammy Jay Proves That He is Not All Bad.	136
367. The Little Chuck Who Didn't Mind.	138
368. What Happened to the Little Chuck Who Was So Smart.	139
369. Johnny Chuck Tells Peter Rabbit His Troubles.	140
370. Peter Rabbit Comforts Johnny Chuck.	141
Illustrations. April 14 to April 19, 1913.	142
371. Johnny Chuck's Three Friends.	144
372. The Bravery of Peter Rabbit.	145
373. Jimmy Skunk has Hard Luck.	146

374. Jimmy Skunk Has a Narrow Escape.	148
375. Unc' Billy Possum Takes His Turn.	149
376. Unc' Billy Possum Has a Good Time	150
Illustrations. April 21 to April 26, 1913.	151
377. What a Sneeze Did	152
378. Unc' Billy Possum Tries an Old Trick	154
379. Unc' Billy Possum Comes to Life.	155
380. Sammy Jay Feels Sorry.	156
381. Sammy Jay Spreads the News.	157
382. Jimmy Skunk Calls a Meeting.	158
Illustrations. April 28 to May 3, 1913.	160
383. The Meeting by the Smiling Pool.	161
384. Reddy Fox Plans Trouble.	162
385. What Happened in Farmer Brown's Dooryard	163
386. Farmer Brown's Boy Has a Double Surprise.	164
387. The Baby Chuck Refuses to Go Home.	166
388. Johnny Chuck Goes Himself.	167
Illustrations. May 5 to May 10, 1913.	168
389. Discontent of Peter Rabbit.	170
390. Peter Rabbit Decides to Change His Name	171
391. Peter Cottontail.	172
392. Peter Cottontail Goes Forth for a Walk.	173
393. There's Nothing Like the Old Name After All.	175
394. Jerry Muskrat Makes a Discovery.	176
Illustrations. May 12 to May 17, 1913.	177
395. Grandfather Frog Watches his Toes.	179
396. The Laughing Brook Stops Laughing.	180
397. Why the World Looked Upside Down to Jerry Muskrat.	181
398. Five Heads Together.	182
399. A Hunt for Trouble	184
Illustrations. May 19 to May 24, 1913.	185
400. Ol' Mistah Buzzard Sees Something.	186
401. Spotty the Turtle Keeps Right on Going.	187
402. What Spotty the Turtle Found.	188
403. The Pond in the Green Forest.	190
404. Who Had Made the Strange Pond?	191
405. Jerry Muskrat's Big Cousin.	192
Illustrations. May 26 to May 31, 1913.	194
406. Jerry Muskrat Has a Busy Day	195

407. Jerry Muskrat Has a Disappointment	196
408. Jerry Muskrat Keeps Watch	197
409. The Stranger is Polite.	199
410. Paddy the Beaver.	200
411. A Merry Home-going.	201
Illustrations. June 2 to June 7, 1913.	203
412. Paddy the Beaver Decides to Stay.	204
413. The Strange Voice.	205
414. Peter Rabbit's Run For Life	206
415. The Great Fright on the Green Meadows	208
416. Reddy Fox Makes a Discovery	209
417. Reddy Fox Consults Bobby Coon	210
Illustrations. June 9 to June 14, 1913.	212
418. Reddy Fox Visits Jimmy Skunk	213
419. Jimmy Skunk Goes With Reddy Fox	214
420. A Call on Digger the Badger	216
421. Old Man Coyote Makes Himself at Home	217
422. Old Man Coyote Meets Reddy Fox	219
423. Granny Fox Visits Prickly Porky	220
Illustrations. June 16 to June 21, 1913.	221
424. Granny Fox Tells Porky a Story	222
425. Granny Fox Tells Another Story	224
426. Prickly Porky Has A Bad Day	226
427. The Meeting at the Laughing Brook	227
428. Slow Wit and Quick Wit.	228
429. Prickly Porky's Tail.	229
Illustrations. June 23 to June 28, 1913.	231
430. Old Man Coyote's Smartness.	232
431. Granny Fox is Found Out.	233
432. Granny Fox Grows Thin.	234
433. The Cunning of Old Granny Fox.	236
434. Bowser the Hound Has a Dream.	237
435. The Clever Plan of Granny Fox.	238
Illustrations. June 30 to July 5, 1913.	240
436. How Peter Rabbit Helped Old Man Coyote.	241
437. Why the Clever Plan of Granny Fox Failed.	242
438. Granny Fox Has Another Disappointment.	244
439. Peter Rabbit Loses His Appetite.	245
440. Peter Rabbit Plans a Journey.	246

441. Hooty the Owl Changes his Hunting Grounds.	248
Illustrations. July 7 to July 12, 1913.	249
442. The Shadow with Sharp Claws.	250
443. The Old Pasture.	251
444. Peter Rabbit is Still Lonesome	252
445. Peter Finds Tracks	254
446. The Strange Tracks in The Old Pasture	255
447. An Unpleasant Surprise	256
Illustrations. July 14 to July 19, 1913.	257
448. Peter Rabbit Almost Decides to Return Home	258
449. Peter Rabbit has a Sudden Change of Heart	260
450. Peter Rabbit Learns from his Friend, Tommy Tit	261
451. Little Miss Fuzzytail Peeps at Peter Rabbit	262
452. Some One Fools Old Jed Thumper, the Gray Rabbit	263
453. A Pleasant Surprise for Peter Rabbit	264
Illustrations. July 21 to July 26, 1913.	265
454. Peter Rabbit Hunts Up His Looking-Glass	267
455. Peter Rabbit at Last Meets Miss Fuzzytail	268
456. Tommy Tit, the Chickadee, Proves a Friend Indeed	269
457. Old Man Coyote Pays Debt Owed to Peter Rabbit	270
458. Miss Fuzzytail Yields at Last to Peter Rabbit	
459. Peter and Little Miss Fuzzytail Quit Old Pasture	273
Illustrations. July 28 to August 2, 1913.	274
460. Sammy Jay is Curious About New Mrs Peter	276
461. Peter Rabbit Introduces Mrs. Peter	277
462. Danny Meadow Mouse Warns Peter Rabbit	279
463. Peter Rabbit's Heedlessness Brings Danger	280
464. Peter Rabbit Listens to Mrs Peter	281
465. Mistah Mocker Plays a Joke on Mrs. Peter	283
Illustrations. August 4, 1913 to August 9, 1913.	284
466. Chatterer the Red Squirrel Tells the Wrong Story	285
467. Drummer the Woodpecker is Robbed Again	286
468. Chatterer the Red Squirrel Tells Another Untruth	287
469. Mistah Mocker Lends his Voice to Sammy Jay	289
470. Mistah Mocker Grows Wiser but Sadder	290
471. Mistah Mocker and Sammy Jay as Conspirators	291
Illustrations. August 11, 1913 to August 16, 1913.	292
472. Sammy Jay and Mistah Mocker Compare Notes	294
473. Mistah Mocker Pays a Visit to Johnny Chuck	295

474. Planning a Trap for Chatterer the Red Squirrel	296
475. Sammy Jay Calls on Reddy Fox with an Idea	298
476. Chatterer Red Squirrel Falls Into the Trap	299
477. Drummer the Woodpecker Begs Pardon	300
Illustrations. August 18, 1913 to August 23, 1913.	301
478. News From the Dear Old Briar Patch	303
479. Jimmy Skunk Pays a Visit to Peter Rabbit	304
480. Reddy Fox Gets News Peter is Trying to Hide	305
481. Blacky the Crow has Very Sharp Eyes	307
482. Peter Rabbit's Four Babies in their Nursery	308
483. Peter Rabbit Comes Home Just in Time	309
Illustrations. August 25, 1913 to August 30, 1913.	310
484. Play Days in the Old Briar Patch	312
485. Peter Rabbit Heeds Sammy Jay's Warning	313
486. The School in the Old Briar Patch	314
487. Little Peter Learns Still Another Lesson	315
488. The Four Little Bunnies Learn How to "Freeze"	317
489. Learning How to Follow Mammy's Tail	318
Illustrations. September 1 to September 6, 1913.	319
490. Little Pete Didn't Mean to be Careless	320
491. Little Pete Follows a Spot of White	322
492. Little Pete Catches Up with White Spot	323
493. All, All Alone at Night on the Meadows	324
494. Little Pete in Fear Holds his Breath	325
495. Friendly Little Night Breeze Saves Pete	326
Illustrations. September 8 to September 13, 1913.	327
496. Little Pete Learns What his Nose is For	329
497. Another Friend Appears	330
498. Little Pete Does Some Hard Thinking	331
499. The Heedlessness of Little Pete	333
500. Danny Meadow Mouse Proves a Friend Indeed	334
501. The Wonderful Old Stonewall	335
Illustrations. September 15 to September 20, 1913.	336
502. Over the Old Stone Wall	338
503. Little Pete Sees a Giant	339
504. Farmer Brown's Boy Makes a Discovery	340
505. The Queer House in the Cabbage Patch	342
506. Home Again at Last	343
507. Timid Danny Meadow Mouse	344

Illustrations. September 22 to September 27, 1913.	345
508. An Exciting Day for Danny Meadow Mouse	347
509. What Happened Next to Danny Meadow Mouse	348
510. Reddy Fox is Very Curious	349
511. Reddy Fox Loses his Temper	351
512. Grandfather Frog Falls Asleep	352
513. Billy Mink Finds Little Joe Otter	353
Illustrations. September 29 to October 4, 1913.	354
514. Longlegs, the Blue Heron, Receives Callers	356
515. Longlegs Visits the Smiling Pool	357
516. The Patience of Longlegs, the Blue Heron	358
517. Grandfather Frog Jumps Just in Time	360
518. Longlegs and Whitetail Quarrel	361
Illustrations. October 6 to October 11, 1913.	363
519. Grandfather Frog's Big Mouth Gets Him in Trouble	364
520. Spotty the Turtle Plays a Doctor	365
521. Old Mr Toad Visits Grandfather Frog	366
522. Grandfather Frog and Old Mr Toad Dispute	368
523. Grandfather Frog Starts Out to See the Great World	369
524. Old Grandfather Frog is Stubborn	370
Illustrations. October 13 to October 18, 1913.	372
525. Grandfather Frog Keeps On	373
526. Danny Meadow Mouse Feels Responsible	374
527. Grandfather Frog Has a Strange Ride	376
528. Grandfather Frog Gives Up Hope	377
529. The Merry Little Breezes Work Hard	378
530. Striped Chipmunk Cuts the String	380
Illustrations. October 20 to October 25, 1913.	381
531. Grandfather Frog Hurries Away	382
532. Grandfather Frog Jumps into More Trouble	384
533. Grandfather Frog Loses Heart	385
534. Merry Little Breezes Try to Comfort Grandfather Frog	386
535. Grandfather Frog's Troubles Grow	388
536. Dear Old Smiling Pool Once More	389
537. Paddy the Beaver Gives Warning	390
Illustrations. October 27 to November 1, 1913.	391
538. An Important Meeting at the Smiling Pool	393
539. Smiling Pool is Deserted	394
540. Paddy Beaver Working Hard	396

541. Building the Dam	397
Illustrations. November 3 to November 8, 1913.	398
542. Paddy the Beaver has Many Visitors	399
543. Sammy Jay Protests	400
544. The Dam of Paddy the Beaver Grows	402
545. Farmer Brown's Boy Grows Curious	403
546. Farmer Brown's Boy Gets a Great Surprise	405
547. Peter Rabbit Gets a Ducking	406
548. Paddy the Beaver Plans a House	407
Illustrations. November 10 to November 15, 1913.	409
549. Paddy the Beaver's House	410
550. More About Building of Paddy's House	411
551. Jerry Muskrat Learns Something	412
552. Paddy the Beaver Finishes his House	414
553. The Queer Storehouse of Paddy the Beaver	415
554. A Footprint in the Mud	416
Illustrations. November 17 to November 22, 1913.	418
555. Sammy Jay Makes Paddy a Call	419
556. Old Man Coyote is Very Crafty	420
557. Old Man Coyote is Disappointed	422
558. Old Man Coyote Tries Another Plan	423
559. Paddy the Beaver and Sammy Jay Become Friends	424
560. Paddy the Beaver and Sammy Jay Talk Things Over	425
Illustrations. November 24 to November 29, 1913.	427
561. Paddy Digs a Canal	428
562. Paddy Finishes his Harvest	429
563. Sammy Jay and Farmer Brown's Boy	430
564. Farmer Brown's Boy Does a Mean Thing	432
565. Paddy the Beaver Too Smart for Farmer Brown's Boy	433
566. Farmer Brown's Boy Lives Up to His Word	435
Illustrations. December 1 to December 6, 1913.	436
567. Farmer Brown's Boy Visits the Great Forest Again	437
568. Jack Frost Arrives	438
569. Chatterer the Red Squirrel Holds His Tongue	439
570. Chatterer Runs for his Life	441
571. Shadow the Weasel Enjoys Himself	442
572. Chatterer Tries Some Tricks	443
Illustrations. December 8 to December 13, 1913.	444
573. Chatterer has a Dreadful Thought	445

574. Chatterer's Last Chance	446
575. Chatterer tells Sammy Jay about Shadow the Weasel	448
576. Chatterer Leaves the Green Forest	449
577. Chatterer Finds a Home	450
578. Peter Rabbit Listens to the Wrong Voice	452
Illustrations. December 15 to December 20, 1913.	453
579. How Chatterer had Fooled Peter Rabbit	454
583. Peter Rabbit Tries to Do the Right Thing	455
584. Sammy Jay Brings News	457
585. Black Pussy Almost Catches a Good Breakfast	458
Illustrations. December 22 to December 27, 1913.	460
586. Chatterer Fixes Up His New Home	461
587. Chatterer Works Hard	462
588. Sammy Jay Drops a Hint	463
589. Chatterer Screws up his Courage	464
590. Chatterer Studies a Way to Get Farmer Brown's Corn	466
Illustrations. December 29 to December 31, 1913.	468
Appendix 1. Thornton W. Burgess's 1913 Promotion and Reception.	469
Images for Appendix 1.	497
Appendix 2. Names and Natural History	498
Appendix 3. The Joy of the Beautiful Pine by Thornton W. Burgess	501

Introduction.

By the beginning of 1913 Thornton W. Burgess's "Little Stories for Bedtime" was not just one of many features offered by Associated Newspapers, it was a leading feature that was used to promote newspaper subscriptions and the syndicate itself. The language used in promotional copy distributed to member newspapers in February asserted, "The most popular stories published anywhere are the Little Stories for Bedtime By Thornton W. Burgess, which appear every day in [member newspaper]." To this the *Boston Globe* added:

This is something fathers, mothers and teachers have been looking for years. A delightfully interesting collection of stories about the doings of the animals who dwell in woodland, field and farm by one of the masters of the English language. Animal characters that challenge comparison with the best in the works of any writer from Aesop to Joel Chandler Harris. (February 9, 1913, page 39)

That this was not just hype can be demonstrated by the volume of letters to the editor reported during this year related to Burgess's stories. When the *Houston Chronicle* ran a poll to gauge the popularity of its special features in June, "Little Stories for Bedtime" led at first and ended up tied for second with Mutt & Jeff. By November, 1913, the editor of the *Omaha World-Herald* asserted "No special feature ever printed in a Nebraska newspaper has met with the welcome and the constant attention that this department in the *World-Herald* has attracted." (November 13, 1913 page 8)

Some of this fascination was related to the serial format of the feature and Burgess's increasing efforts to establish continuity across months and years. When newspapers accidentally missed a day they appear to have been deluged with letters, so much that the *Omaha World-Herald* made it a practice to announce in advance days when skipped stories would be printed. Meanwhile, Burgess's stories frequently referred to moments in previous episodes, some references dating back to the earliest days of the feature in 1912. (These references are footnoted throughout this volume). In order to capture this continuity, readers clipped stories and collected them in scrapbooks (and shared their scrapbook methods). Readers frustrated by being late-comers to the feature wrote to newspapers asking for book-length story collections. The demand for collected book versions was partially satisfied in September with the release of the first two books in the "Bedtime Story-Book" series, *The Adventures of Reddy Fox* and *The Adventures of Johnny Chuck*, which compiled some newspaper stories from 1912 and 1913 respectively

Reader engagement with the feature was sometimes critical. One story, told over the course of several weeks in April and May, was particularly controversial for its unrelenting suspense and its ending. Farmer Brown's boy had captured a baby chuck to raise as a pet. Despite the heroic efforts of three animal characters to save him, including Unc' Billy Possum, who himself was captured, the baby chuck refused to return home, preferring his domesticated life. The reaction to this ending among readers of the *Los Angeles Express*, led by a correspondent signing her letters "Aunt

Ruth,” was so vociferous that the editor of the paper was compelled to write a long defense of Burgess’s decision.

Harrison Cady became the feature’s illustrator starting August 11 and would provide captioned single panel drawings for the feature six days a week (holidays excepted) for the next 47 years. Cady was a celebrated cartoonist and illustrator, but his first contributions were not entirely welcomed by readers. Although Burgess’s characters had been illustrated wearing clothes throughout 1912, during most of 1913 they had been unclothed. Associated Newspapers prompted syndicate members to poll readers whether Cady should continue to draw the characters clothed or unclothed, and letters published in papers showed divided opinion. By the year’s end, Cady would clothe certain characters (Peter Rabbit) but not others (Paddy the Beaver).

In July, corresponding to the announcement of the upcoming Bedtime Story-book series, Burgess wrote “How I Came to Write the Bedtime Stories,” and this was published across the Associated Newspapers network, generally run with an extended biography, apparently drawn from Little, Brown & Co.’s “About Books” circular, as well as a large, illustrated version of his publicity photo from the previous year. This was Burgess’s first time writing directly to his readership, and in the essay he offered an elaborate and somewhat fanciful origin story.

The editor of your paper has written to me asking me to tell you how I came to write the “Little Stories for Bedtime” which he is good enough to print every night. Perhaps you have guessed that they were first written for someone in particular. They were—for a little blue-eyed boy who had gone away for a visit, leaving daddy very lonely, especially at story telling time, just before the sandman came.

It was the night after he left that Old Mother West Wind slipped in at my window and whispered a story about Johnny Chuck and the Green Meadows. Of course I reached for my pen and wrote it just as she told it to me, and gave it that very night to Uncle Sam to take to the little boy who had gone visiting. Every night after that Old Mother West Wind would whisper a story while I wrote it down and every day Uncle Sam would take one of these stories in his mail to be read at bedtime to the little boy and the two little cousins whom he was visiting. (*Kansas City Star*, July 25, 1913, page 2).

In the essay he also confirmed the thoughts of some newspaper correspondents—that his stories were designed to teach his young readers to love “the little meadow and forest people.”

You see, I love them dearly myself, and I want everybody else to love them, particularly little boys and girls. Then when they grow up they will know what lots of grown people do not know today—that the little wild people of the Green Meadows and the Green Forest really want to be their friends and that many of them are really working the best they know how to help us. I don’t believe that they would be hunted and frightened so much if everyone knew that, do you? (*Kansas City Star*, July 25, 1913, page 2)

On November 5, Burgess would also make his first public appearance, speaking

to an audience in his hometown of Springfield, Massachusetts, on “Animal Characters in Books.” He also offered a special bedtime story, “The Joy of the Beautiful Pine” for his local community, published in a booklet intended to help fund Springfield’s municipal Christmas tree display and run in the *Springfield Republican* on December 21. His regular newspaper feature would not get a Christmas story in 1913. (Full documentation of Burgess’s promotion and reception during 1913 are found in Appendix 1 and the “The Joy of the Beautiful Pine” is reproduced in full in Appendix 3 of this volume.)

During 1913, overall, the world of the Green Meadows and the Green Forest was still an enchanted one but Burgess’s stories became increasingly naturalistic as the year progressed. At the beginning of the year, however, Burgess made what was perhaps his most glaring natural history mistake, depicting Peter Rabbit’s coat turning white for the winter. That cottontails retain their brown coat during the winter should be obvious to anyone who takes walks during the season—something Burgess did regularly—so this lapse is difficult to understand. This issue, as well as further comments on the name “Peter Rabbit,” are discussed in Appendix 2 of this volume.

By the end of the year, most newspapers running the feature were running it on the intended date with the intended title and intended illustration. The *Kansas City Star* experimented with changing its header image in May but apparent reader devotion to the earlier header caused the paper to revert to the earlier version. Meanwhile other Associated Newspaper members began using a header image influenced by the *Kansas City Star*’s version, but with a more explicitly positive feel. (See these headers on the following page, along with a photographic homage to the *Kansas City Star*’s header).

As discussed in the introduction to the 1912 volume, the story numbers used in this volume are for the most part unofficial best guesses. Story 583, published on December 22 is the first available numbered story in the Thornton W. Burgess archive at the Massachusetts Historical Society. My count up to that date is 580, off by three stories, which are either missing or the result of a miscount on Burgess’s part. The numbering in this volume jumps from 579 to 583 in an attempt to reconcile these different story counts. I remain indebted to Wayne Wright’s bibliography (2000) for its detailed list of connections between Burgess’s newspaper stories and their book forms.



Kansas City Star header image.



Kansas City Star short-lived alternative header image.



Widely shared Associated Newspapers header image.



Reading the "Bedtime Story."
Picture displayed at photography studio.
Pose is homage to Little Stories for
Bedtime header image.

Kansas City Star, September 12, 1913, p.20

Unc' Billy Possum Plays a Joke

Some folks never seem to be
Satisfied or quite content;
Always wanting something more
That fo' them was never meant."

Unc' Billy Possum said this to himself as he watched Peter Rabbit hurrying about through the Green Forest and over the Green Meadows, eating as fast as ever he could so as to grow fat that he might keep warm while he slept all winter. Now Unc' Billy Possum knew perfectly well that Peter Rabbit couldn't sleep all winter as Johnny Chuck does, for Old Mother Nature had never planned that Peter should. But Unc' Billy knew that it was of no use to tell Peter that, for Peter wouldn't believe him. So he chuckled as he watched Peter rush around hunting for food and actually running off what little fat he did have, instead of putting on more.

Of course it just happened that Unc' Billy Possum was right over near the old house built by Grandfather Skunk a long time ago, which Peter Rabbit had decided to sleep in all winter. It just happened that he saw Peter when he finally went down to the little bedchamber at the end of the long hall to curl up and try to go to sleep. Unc' Billy grinned. Then he chuckled. Finally he laughed until his fat sides shook.

"Ah reckon Ah'm gwine to have some fun with Brer Rabbit," said Unc' Billy, still chuckling, as he trotted off through the Green Forest. He went over to Bobby Coon's house and found Bobby, who had been out all night, just getting ready for bed. But Bobby is always ready to play a joke, and when Unc' Billy told him about Peter Rabbit and what fun it would be to give Peter a scare, Bobby scrambled down from his hollow tree right away. Then they hunted up Jimmy Skunk, and the three started for the old house of Grandfather Skunk, where Peter Rabbit was trying to go to sleep for the winter.

"Ah done tell Peter that when he tried to go to sleep he mustn't get to thinking about what would happen if Brer Fox should jes' happen along and find him asleep. Ah reckons that that is the very first thing Peter did think of, as soon as he curled himself up and that he's thinking of it morn' ever right this blessed minute. Yo'all wait while Ah listen at the door."

Unc' Billy stole very softly to the door of the old house. Then he began to grin and beckoned to Bobby Coon and Jimmy Skunk to come listen. They could hear long sighs from way down in the bedchamber at the end of the long hall. They heard Peter twist and turn, as he tried to make himself comfortable. But when they heard him saying a verse over and over to try to make himself go to sleep, they had to clap their hands over their mouths to keep from laughing out loud.

When they grew tired of listening, Unc' Billy whispered to Jimmy Skunk. Jimmy Skunk grinned, and then he crept a little way down the long hall and began to scratch

with his stout claws, as if he were digging. When he stopped, Unc' Billy put his mouth down close to the doorway and barked as nearly like Reddy Fox as he could. Then Jimmy began to dig again, and pretty soon Unc' Billy barked again. Then all three stole softly away and hid behind some bushes.

"Ah reckon Br'er Rabbit is right smart wide-awake instead of going to sleep fo' the winter!" chuckled Unc' Billy.

(The Adventures of Peter Cottontail, Chapter 25)

STORY 277. January 2, 1913

Peter Rabbit Learns His Lesson.

Peter Rabbit, curled up in the little bedchamber at the end of the long hall in the old house made a long time ago by Grandfather Skunk, twisted and turned and tried to make himself feel sleepy for he wanted to go to sleep for all winter as Johnny Chuck does. But the harder he tried, the more wide-awake he seemed to feel. Then he began to think of Reddy and Granny Fox and what would happen if by any chance they should find him there fast asleep, and right while he was thinking about it, he heard a noise that made him jump so that he bumped his head.

Peter didn't think anything about the bump on his head! No, sir, Peter didn't even notice it. He was too frightened. He held his breath and listened, while his heart went pit-a-pat, pit-a-pat. There it was again, that noise he had heard before! Someone was in the long, dark hall! There was no doubt about it. He could hear claws scratching. Whoever it was, was digging. Digging! The very thought made every hair on Peter Rabbit stand on end. He knew that Johnny Chuck had gone to sleep for the winter. He knew that Jimmy Skunk could walk right in without any trouble, and that Jimmy never takes any trouble that he can avoid. He knew that Bobby Coon and Unc' Billy Possum don't go into houses underground unless they have to, to get away from danger, and very seldom then.

If someone was digging in the long, dark hall, it could mean but one thing—that it must be someone too big to get in without making the hall larger; and the only ones he could think of were Bowser the Hound and Reddy and Granny Fox! Peter shivered and shook, for unlike Johnny Chuck's house, this one had no back door.

"If it's Bowser the Hound, he may get tired and go away. Anyway, I can soon tell, for he will sniff and snuff and blow the sand out of his nose," thought Peter, and strained his ears to hear the first sniff.

But there were no sniffs or snuffs. Instead, Peter heard a sound that made his heart almost stop beating again. It was a bark, a bark that sounded very much like the bark of Reddy Fox, and it came from just outside the door! That could mean but one thing—that old Granny Fox was digging her way in to the little bedchamber, while Reddy kept watch outside.

"Oh, dear! Oh, dear! Why wasn't I content to live as I always have lived? Why did

I try to do something I never was intended to do for?” cried Peter to himself, and shook with fright harder than ever.

There was nothing to do but to sit still and wait. Peter sat as still as ever he could. After a little while, the noise in the long, dark hall stopped. Peter waited and waited, but all was still, and he began to feel better. Perhaps old Granny Fox didn’t know that he was there at all and had grown tired of digging and had gone away. Peter waited a long time and then peeped out into the long hall. Way up at the end he could see light where the doorway was, and by this he knew that no one was in the hall.

Little by little, his heart going pit-a-pat, Peter crept up until he could peep outside. No one was to be seen. With his heart almost in his mouth, Peter sprang out and started for the dear old briar patch as fast as his long legs could take him. And then he heard a sound that made him stop suddenly and sit up.

“Ha, ha, ha! Ho, ho, ho! Hee, hee, hee!”

There, behind some bushes, Unc’ Billy Possum, Bobby Coon, and Jimmy Skunk were laughing fit to kill themselves. Then Peter knew that they had played a joke on him, and he shook his fist at them. But down in his heart he was glad, for he knew that he had learned his lesson—that he had no business to try to do what Old Mother Nature had never intended that he should do.

(The Adventures of Peter Cottontail, Chapter 26)

STORY 278. January 3, 1913

The First Snow.

Peter Rabbit pinched himself. Yes, sir, that is just what Peter Rabbit did—pinched himself. Then he rubbed his eyes, and after that he pinched himself again. You see, Peter wanted to be sure, really true, that he was awake, and he was finding it very hard to be sure. Where were the Green Meadows and the Green Forest? They had disappeared all in a single night. Peter looked this way and looked that way, and his big eyes grew bigger with wonder. He couldn’t see a single thing that looked as it had looked the night before. He knew that he was in his safe retreat in the middle of the dear old briar patch, for right over old his head were the friendly brambles under which Peter had sat and dreamed often and often. And yet they had changed, and the old briar patch had changed and had become a new and wonderful place.

The ground was covered with a wonderful carpet of white as soft as the down on Mrs. Quack’s breast, and every smallest, teeniest, weeniest twig of the bushes growing among the brambles, and the brambles themselves, were piled high with this same soft, white stuff until they bent over to the ground and made the most wonderful caves and hiding places. It was a new world, a fairy world. Peter looked up in the blue, blue sky, and when he saw jolly, round, red Mr. Sun looking down and laughing at him just as usual, he gave a great sigh.

“It is real! It really is real! I wonder how it looks outside the old briar patch,” he

said, and started to find out.

How soft that white carpet was! Peter's feet sank into it as he hopped along one of his private little paths, which now stretched before him like a little white ribbon, and every time his feet sank in he had a funny feeling, for this was the first time he had ever felt anything quite so soft and cool.

"What is it, anyway?" said Peter, talking to himself out loud. Then into his head popped some stories which he had heard old Mrs. Rabbit tell when he was very, very small. "Why, this must be snow, and winter has really come!" cried Peter, suddenly sitting up very straight and clapping his hands, for you know this was his first snow, and of course his first winter¹. Then he kicked up his heels and scampered out on to the Green Meadows—only they were not green any more. They were white, so beautifully white! And they sparkled so that Peter's eyes almost smarted from looking at them.

Peter looked back at the old briar patch and then for the first time he saw something new—his own tracks. There they were, the print of each foot as plain as plain could be. It tickled Peter a lot to see them. He ran about to make more, running in circles and twisting and turning, and every few minutes sitting up to look at the funny patterns he had made in the snow. Then he kicked up his heels some more, and did foolish things just because the world was so beautiful and he felt so happy.

"My!" said Peter to himself. "Just think of all that Johnny Chuck is missing by sleeping all winter! Why, I wouldn't have missed this for anything!"

You see Peter didn't let himself remember how hard he had tried to sleep all winter, too.

(Mother West Wind's Neighbors, Chapter 14, "Peter Rabbit's First Snow," part 1)

STORY 279. January 4, 1913

Peter Rabbit Goes Exploring

Peter Rabbit felt as if he were living in a new world, a wonderful new world, a great white world of which he knew nothing at all. It was all very delightful and very strange. Peter jumped up and kicked his heels for very joy.

There was an old lady lived up in the clouds,
A fussy old lady, 'twas plain to be seen:
She sputtered about and she puttered around,
A rubbing and scrubbing to keep her house clean.

Along came a rogue by the name of Jack Frost
And found this old lady's bed put out to air.
He opened the ticking, the feathers tossed out,
And people below said, "It's snowing for fair."

So sang Peter Rabbit as he scampered across the Green Meadows, which were now

¹ Burgess departs from strict continuity here. See reference to previous winters in STORY 267, 1912.

white instead of green, to the Green Forest, which was white too. There was the Lone Little Path, all white and smooth and beautiful, and very plain to be seen now where it wound about among the bushes. Peter had to stop two or three times to stare at it for in the Summer when the million leaves were on the bushes the Lone Little Path had been hard to see.

"I guess I'll run up and call on Unc' Billy Possum," said Peter and hurried faster than ever, lipperty-lipperty-lip. When he reached the hollow tree which was Unc' Billy Possum's home the snow lay smooth all about the foot of it, and so Peter knew that no one had been out that morning. He called and called, but no one answered.

"Pooh!" exclaimed Peter "Must be every one's asleep in there! Just think what they are missing!"

Then he started off, for he just felt that he had got to look into every one of the wonderful caves of snow under the hemlock trees. It was great fun. Here he was right in the midst of the Green Forest he knew so well and yet here on every side were these wonderful caves which he had never seen before, and the strange mounds of sparkling white which puzzled Peter until he found some familiar old stump or log hidden away underneath.

So Peter made his funny tracks all through the Green Forest until finally he grew just a wee bit tired and sat down in one of the white caves to rest.

"How still, how very still it is," thought Peter. Not a sound could he hear. He began to have just a wee bit of lonely feeling. It was great fun exploring this new world, but he wanted to talk it all over with someone. Could it be that everybody but himself had gone to sleep, to sleep all Winter? What a dreadful thought! But just as Peter began to be afraid that this was really true, he heard a voice way over near the Laughing Brook, and the voice cried: "Thief! Thief! Thief!"

Then he heard another voice sputtering and scolding so fast that the words seemed to just fall over each other. Peter smiled. Sammy Jay and Chatterer the Red Squirrel wouldn't be happy, not even in such a beautiful world as this without quarreling, said he as he hopped off in the direction of the Laughing Brook.

(Mother West Wind's Neighbors, Chapter 14, "Peter Rabbit's First Snow," part 2)

STORY 280. January 6, 1913

Mrs. Grouse Puts on Snowshoes.

Peter Rabbit scampered down to the Laughing Brook, where he could hear Sammy Jay and Chatterer the Red Squirrel quarreling and calling each other names as fast as their tongues could go. It was good to hear them. Yes, sir, those angry voices actually sounded good to Peter Rabbit, and he laughed aloud and ran faster.

You see, Peter had begun to think that he was the only one awake in the wonderful great white fairy world that the snow had made of the Green Meadows and the Green Forest. He had peeked into dozens of the most wonderful white caves and had lost

Illustrations. January 1 to January 4, 1913.



276. Unc' Billy Possum Plays a Joke



277. Peter Rabbit Learns his Lesson



278. The First Snow



279. Peter Rabbit Goes Exploring

himself and found himself again ever so many times right in that part of the Green Forest where his playground had been all summer, but which the snow had changed so that it was like a new and beautiful fairyland. But Peter had not met a single friend, and it had been so still that he could hear his heart beat. At least he thought he could. So, by and by, he began to feel lonely, and that is why the quarreling voices of Sammy Jay and Chatterer sounded so good to him. Besides, he knew that their quarrels never amounted to anything, and that it was really their way of enjoying themselves.

A pointed tongue has Sammy Jay
And Chatterer has sharpened wits:
Now tell us pray, if you can see
How gentle speech with either fits.

It doesn't, and both Sammy Jay and Chatterer the Red Squirrel say a great many sharp things without really meaning them at all. When Peter came in sight, they stopped quarreling.

"Hello, Long Ears! I heard that you were going to sleep all winter!" shouted Sammy Jay.

"Did you have bad dreams?" asked Chatterer, who knew all about the joke Uncle Billy Possum had played on Peter when Peter foolishly tried to go to sleep for the winter in Grandfather Skunk's old house.

Peter grinned good naturedly and made a face at Sammy Jay and Chatterer.

"Isn't it a great day?" he cried.

"Great!" replied Chatterer. "Have you got your snowshoes on?"

"What are snowshoes?" asked Peter pricking up his ears.

"Go ask Mrs. Grouse," replied Chatterer. "She has hers on this morning."

"Where is she?" asked Peter, preparing to start right away, for his curiosity would not let him sit still.

"Under the hemlocks up on the hill," replied Chatterer. "What's your hurry?"

But Peter was already on his way up the hill. Pretty soon he noticed some queer tracks in the snow. He had never seen any like them before. They looked just a little like the prints of Mrs. Quack's feet which he had once seen in the mud on the edge of Farmer Brown's duck pond. But Mrs. Quack never comes into the Green Forest; at least Peter never had seen her there. So Peter wondered and wondered whose tracks these could be and followed them to find out, forgetting all about Mrs. Grouse and her snowshoes.

Lipperty-lipperty-lip, scampered Peter Rabbit, following the queer tracks. Indeed, he didn't have eyes for anything else, and almost ran plump into Mrs. Grouse herself.

"Haven't you anything better to do than running people down? Where are your eyes, Peter Rabbit?" snapped Mrs. Grouse, ruffling up her feathers.

“I—I beg your pardon!” said Peter. “There’s a stranger in the Green Forest making queer tracks, and—” Peter stopped and stared. Mrs. Grouse had walked away from him and she was making the queer tracks.

“Ha, ha, ha!” laughed Mrs. Grouse. “I made them myself with my new snowshoes.”

Peter looked at her feet. Sure enough she was wearing snowshoes. They were of feathers which grew put between her toes, and when she walked on the snow, she hardly sank in at all.

“My, I wish I had snowshoes!” cried Peter.

(*Mother West Wind’s Neighbors*, Chapter 14, “Peter Rabbit’s First Snow,” part 3)

STORY 281. January 7, 1913

Jimmy Skunk and Billy Mink Have a Dispute.

Billy Mink came galloping along through the snow that covered the Lone Little Path. Billy rather enjoyed the snow and the sharp, frosty air. His thick, brown and black fur coat kept him as warm as he wanted to be and he had no fear of Jack Frost. Half way up the Lone Little Path he met Jimmy Skunk, who is a distant cousin. Jimmy was shuffling along and grumbling to himself.

“Hi, Jimmy, isn’t this a great day?” cried Billy Mink.

“I suppose so, if you like it,” grumbled Jimmy Skunk. “I don’t! It’s too cold and I don’t like snow, anyway.”

“Pooh!” exclaimed Billy Mink, “you’re a pretty one, you are, to be complaining of the cold when you’ve got one of the warmest fur coats in the Green Forest or on the Green Meadows. If you don’t like the snow, what did you come out for?”

“I don’t know. I don’t know what I did come out for,” replied Jimmy Skunk. “I think I’ll go back home and sleep for a while.”

“I would, if I were you, old grumbler,” laughed Billy Mink. “I believe the trouble with you, Jimmy, is that you are too lazy to walk in the snow. I see Peter Rabbit has been up the Lone Little Path ahead of me.”

“You mean he has been down the Lone Little Path,” said Jimmy Skunk.

“I don’t mean anything of the kind!” snapped Billy Mink, whose temper is rather short. “I said up and I mean up!”

“But Peter Rabbit hasn’t been up the Lone Little Path; he went the other way,” insisted Jimmy Skunk obstinately. “Just look at his tracks there!”

“Look at them yourself!” retorted Billy Mink. “There are the two long prints of his two long hind feet, and right behind them are the two little prints of his two front feet. What are you laughing at?” Billy glared angrily at Jimmy Skunk.

“You mean the two little prints of his front feet are right in front, not behind, the two long prints of his hind feet,” replied Jimmy, with a provoking grin. “You’re twisted, Billy. You’ve got him running up hill backwards. Ha, ha, ha! Who ever heard of such a thing? Ha, ha, ha!”

Billy Mink danced up and down and gritted his teeth he was so angry. “What’s the matter with your eyes, Jimmy Skunk? What’s the matter with your eyes?” he shouted. “You’re the one who has got Peter Rabbit running backwards! Don’t you know that Peter plants his hind feet in front of his front feet when he is in a hurry? You ought to know Peter Rabbit well enough by this time to know that!”

Jimmy Skunk stared at Billy Mink as if he thought Billy had suddenly gone crazy. “Puts his hind feet down in front of his front feet,” repeated Jimmy Skunk. Whoever heard of such a thing? Ho, ho, ho! Who ever heard of such a thing?”

Billy Mink’s eyes snapped and he looked as if he would spring at Jimmy Skunk, but just then a new voice broke in.

“Squibble, squabble, squabble,
What a lot of gabble!

“What are you two fellows fighting about this fine morning?”

It was Peter Rabbit himself.

“Run, Peter, run!” cried Billy Mink.

“Yes, do run!” shouted Jimmy Skunk.

Peter didn’t know what he should run for, but just to be obliging he did run.

“What did I tell you, smarty?” cried Billy Mink.

Jimmy Skunk looked foolish and very much as if he couldn’t believe his own eyes. Peter Rabbit did put his hind feet down in front of his front feet when he ran! In fact, that is the reason that Peter can make such long jumps.

STORY 282. January 8, 1913

Mrs. Grouse Goes to Bed

Mrs. Grouse was somewhat particular as to where she slept. She had reason to be, had Mrs. Grouse, for there were old Granny Fox and Reddy Fox and Shadow the Weasel, not to mention Jimmy Skunk and Billy Mink, all of whom are much given to roaming through the Green Forest at night instead of sleeping as Mrs. Grouse insists honest folks should. And there was Hooty the Owl whose fierce hunting cry often and often wakened Mrs. Grouse from pleasant dreams to shiver for a minute. She knew that there was not one of them but would be glad of a meal of plump Grouse. By daylight she had no fear of them, for her strong, swift wings would carry her to safety in the twinkling of an eye. They knew it, too, and by day-light were always quite polite to Mrs. Grouse.

So Mrs. Grouse was a little bit fussy as to where she slept. There was a certain big hemlock tree whose great, green branches made the snuggest of friendly hiding places, and in this for a long time Mrs. Grouse had tucked her head under her wing every night. And nobody knew anything about it, for always before she flew up there, she made very sure that no one was about to see her. But Mrs. Grouse prefers to be on the ground, and if she had felt at all safe, she would rather have slept on the ground than in the friendly hemlock tree. Sometimes when fierce Mr. North Wind blew, she shivered a little in spite of her warm cloak of feathers.

But at last came the day when down through the bare branches of the Green Forest sifted a million little snowflakes. Mrs. Grouse watched them pile up and pile up a great, soft blanket on the ground, and she smiled as she watched, for Mrs. Grouse had a plan, the most splendid plan, for a good night's rest. The black shadows came creeping through the Green Forest very early that day and Mrs. Grouse sat on a branch of the hemlock tree smiling away and watching the million little snowflakes sifting down and sifting down. Just before it became really dark she took a good look all about to be sure that no one was watching and then what do you think she did? Why, she just dived head first down into the deepest, softest pile of snow and worked her way along for several feet. Then she turned around two or three times, fluffed out her feathers, made herself very comfortable and tucked her head under her wing.

I love the gentle snow that falls
And turns the world all white:
It makes the very nicest bed,
With blanket soft and light.

Though Hooty's eyes are big and round
He cannot see me here:
From Granny Fox and Jimmy Skunk
I've not a thing to fear.

Jack Frost may blow his coldest blast.
The storm rage high and low,
I do not care the least wee bit
Down here beneath the snow.

Almost before she had finished saying this Mrs. Grouse was fast asleep. The snowflakes sifted down and filled up the hole that Mrs. Grouse had made when she plunged into the snow. Late that night it stopped snowing and the moon came out.

Then Granny Fox and Reddy Fox started out to hunt, for they were hungry. They came down from the far-away Old Pasture to the Green Forest. It was hard work wading through the snow and by-and-by they sat down to rest, and though they didn't know it they were almost over Mrs. Grouse, who was dreaming of warm spring days.

(Mother West Wind's Neighbors, Chapter 15, "Mrs. Grouse Goes to Bed, part 1)

STORY 283. January 9, 1913

How a Breakfast Flew Away.

“Ugh! I don’t like snow! It tires me out to walk through it and it covers up things so. I haven’t smelled a single track since we left the Old Pasture. I say, let’s go up to Farmer Brown’s hen house. I’m dreadfully hungry,” whined Reddy Fox.

Old Granny Fox looked at Reddy out of the corner of one eye. “You’re young and I’m old,” she said, “and you ought to be able to stand a lot more than me. I’m hungry, too, but I’m not hungry enough yet to be willing to risk my skin by going up to Farmer Brown’s hen house. An empty stomach is a whole lot better than skin full of shot. I should think that you would have learned that by this time. I was going to propose that we take up our old home here on the edge of the Green Meadows again, but if you are still such a foolish young Fox as to talk of going up to Farmer Brown’s hen house the very first time you feel emptiness in your stomach, I guess we’d better stay up in the Old Pasture. There isn’t much to eat there in winter, and you’ll have the hardest hunting you’ve ever had, but you’ll be safe.”

Reddy hung his head. He was ashamed of having complained. He knew that what Granny Fox said was true. He tried hard not to think that he was hungry, but inside was such an emptiness, such dreadful emptiness that it was hard to think of anything else. And when he thought of Farmer Brown’s hen house with its roosts full of sleeping hens it seemed as if he just had to go up there.

“One hen wouldn’t be missed,” muttered Reddy.

Old Granny Fox turned and cuffed Reddy’s ears. “I used to think that you had some Fox sense in that head of yours, but you haven’t got even common sense,” she snapped. “Look behind you at those tracks. Don’t you suppose Farmer Brown’s boy has got eyes in his head? When he came out to feed the hens in the morning the very first thing that he would see would be your tracks, and you couldn’t cover them up the way you can on bare ground. Now don’t let me hear any more of this nonsense!”

Reddy looked back at the tracks he and Granny had made and for the first time he realized what telltale the snow is, and he hated it more than ever.

“You’re right, Granny Fox, just as you always are, and I’ll try not to even think of Farmer Brown’s hen house,” said he meekly.

Granny grinned as she said:

“An empty stomach sharpens wit;
We’ll patient be and wait a bit.”

Then she added: “I guess that we’ll find plenty of field mice down on the Green Meadows when it is light, and we can catch them in the snow quite as easily as in the summer grass. Mrs. Grouse lives somewhere around here and it may be that we can surprise her.”

Reddy’s mouth watered at the thought, and as they sat there under the big hemlock

tree watching the first light of the morning creep through the Green Forest, Reddy thought more and more about Mrs. Grouse until it seemed to him as if he could almost smell her and that she must be very near. He was just going to say so to old Granny Fox, when mass of snow was thrown right in his face, and with great noise something shot up so close to his nose that he almost fell over backward with fright.

“What—what was that?” he cried, when he could find his voice.

Granny Fox was grinding her teeth with rage. “That, stupid, was the breakfast we ought to have had! That was Mrs. Grouse and she was sleeping right under us all the time we have been sitting here!”

And from safe place in tall hemlock tree, Mrs. Grouse looked down and smiled on Granny and Reddy Fox.

“It’s nice snow, isn’t it?” said she.

(Mother West Wind’s Neighbors, Chapter 15, part 2)

STORY 284. January 10, 1913

Peter Rabbit Visits the Smiling Pool.

Peter Rabbit had just given old Granny Fox and Reddy Fox the slip by ducking into the dear old briar patch. He had laughed almost in their faces as he sat there safely out of reach, and watched them lick their chops and try to follow him, and then yelp and back out as the good old brambles scratched their faces and tore their bright red coats. Finally, they gave it up and Peter watched them out of sight as they went down across the Green Meadows, which were now white, and past the Smiling Pool. That reminded Peter that he had not been over to the Smiling Pool since the snow and cold weather came.

“Granny and Reddy Fox won’t come back here this morning, and if they should I can run faster in the snow than they can, for I do not break through as they do. I believe I’ll go down and call on Jerry Muskrat,” said Peter to himself.

So as soon as he was sure that Granny and Reddy Fox had really left the Green Meadows, Peter sat up and looked this way and that way to make sure that fierce old Roughleg the Hawk was nowhere about. He was nowhere to be seen, so Peter kicked up his heels and with a light heart he started off, lipperty-lipperty-lip, to call on Jerry Muskrat, and as he ran he sang:

I like the show, the pretty snow,
That makes the world so white!
It covers every ugly thing
And hides it from our sight.

When he reached the Smiling Pool, Peter had to pinch himself twice to be quite sure that it really was the Smiling Pool. You see it wasn’t smiling any more. No, sir, there wasn’t a bit of smile to it. He could hear the Laughing Brook still laughing,

although its laugh did not sound quite so merry as in the warm Summer time, and when he looked over to it, it didn't dimple and sparkle and gleam as he remembered it used to do. It looked black and cold and somehow the very sound of its laugh made Peter Rabbit shiver. He looked again at the Smiling Pool, and then he stared and stared with his mouth wide open in the most foolish way. What was the matter with the Smiling Pool anyway?

Something certainly was the matter. The Smiling Pool looked hard and glassy. Peter kicked some snow down the bank. Instead of sinking out of sight, as it ought to have, it slid along on the surface of the Smiling Pool. Peter stared more than ever and crept nearer to the edge of the bank. Now what happened next Peter never could explain. Perhaps he was nearer the edge than he had thought. Anyway, the first thing he knew his feet had slipped from under him and down the bank he was sliding flat on his back.

Peter closed his eyes and held his breath and waited for the plunge into the cold water. Instead, he landed with a bump that knocked all the breath out of him.

"O," cried Peter Rabbit, and for a full minute lay still staring up at jolly, round, red Mr Sun, who was looking down and laughing at him.

"O," cried Peter again, and tried to scramble to his feet. But something was the matter with his feet! Each foot seemed to want to go in a different direction. Down went Peter again and bumped his nose. The more he struggled the more bumps he got and the more frightened he grew. Finally, when he was quite out of breath, he very carefully sat up. And where do you think he found himself? Why, right on the middle of the Smiling Pool! Peter Rabbit had learned what ice is.

(The Bedtime Calendar # 5)

STORY 285. January 11, 1913

Peter Rabbit Scares Jerry Muskrat.

Peter Rabbit had never in all his life before felt quite so foolish as he did when, after tumbling down the snowy bank, he found himself sitting on the middle of the Smiling Pool instead of in it. He didn't know just what to make of it. He rubbed his head where he had bumped it and he rubbed his nose where he had bumped that, and then, very carefully, so as not to get another bump, he turned around or three times to make sure that he really was where he seemed to be.

There could be no doubt about it. There was the Laughing Brook, and there was the Big Rock, and over yonder was Jerry Muskrat's house. Yes, this certainly was the Smiling Pool. But what had happened to it? Why hadn't he fallen into it and gotten all wet instead of onto it, getting well bumped?

Things are not always what they seem.
I found out long ago
How water can be turned to stone

Is what I'd like to know.

Peter didn't know that he was talking out loud, but he was.

"Go ask Jack Frost," said a harsh voice right over Peter's head. Peter looked up. There was Blacky the Crow on his way to the Green Meadows and Farmer Brown's cornfield in the hope of finding some place where the snow had not covered up all the food.

"Hello, Blacky!" exclaimed Peter Rabbit. "What does Jack Frost know about it?"

"He knows all about it; he did it!" Blacky shouted back over his shoulder.

Peter sat still for a few minutes thinking this over and wondering how under the sun Jack Frost did it. Then his curiosity would let him sit still no longer. All summer long he had watched Billy Mink and Little Joe Otter and Jerry Muskrat playing on the Big Rock in the middle of the Smiling Pool and wished and wished that he could climb up there, too. Now was his chance.

Very, very carefully Peter took a step and then another. He found that if he was careful, he could even run. In a couple of minutes, he was scrambling up on the Big Rock. It was splendid up there. He could look all over the Green Meadows and see way up the Laughing Brook. He played that he was Billy Mink and pretended to dive off the Big Rock. It was great fun.

But playing all alone gets tiresome after a while. Peter stopped pretending and looked over to Jerry Muskrat's house.

"Why!" exclaimed Peter, as a new thought struck him, "I can visit Jerry Muskrat's house now!"

No sooner thought of than off he started, and in a minute was sitting on top of Jerry Muskrat's house. He liked this even better than he did the Big Rock.

"I wonder where Jerry Muskrat is?" thought Peter. And then, just because he was feeling good, he thumped with his hind feet as only Peter can. Peter thumped a second time and then he saw something queer. Something was moving down in the Smiling Pool, moving away from Jerry Muskrat's house. Peter leaned over and looked until it seemed as if his big eyes would pop out of his head. He was looking right down through the ice and what he saw was Jerry Muskrat swimming underneath the ice as fast as he could go.

"I—I believe I scared Jerry. What a joke!" cried Peter, and began to laugh.

(The Bedtime Story Calendar #6, "Jerry Muskrat Has a Scare")

STORY 286. January 13, 1913

Little Joe Otter Has a Good Time.

On Jerry Muskrat's house, right on the highest part of the roof, sat Peter Rabbit laughing so that his sides ached. He had given Jerry Muskrat a scare and it is so seldom

Illustrations. January 6 to January 11, 1913.



280. Mrs. Grouse puts on Snowshoes



281. Jimmy Skunk and Billy Mink Have a Dispute



282. Mrs. Grouse Goes to Bed



283. How a breakfast flew away



284. Peter Rabbit visits the Smiling Pool



285. Peter Rabbit Scares Jerry Muskrat

that Peter can scare any one that it tickled him. You see Jerry Muskrat had been curled up fast asleep in the snug, warm upper chamber of his house when Peter Rabbit had climbed up on the roof. Peter had come across the Smiling Pool, which was frozen. It was his first visit to Jerry Muskrat's house, for always before it had been surrounded by water. When he had reached the top, he thumped with his hind legs just for joy.

Now, Jerry Muskrat, fast asleep and dreaming of warm summer days, knew nothing about Peter. Suddenly he was awakened by a thumping right over his head. Jerry's heart was almost in his mouth with fright. That must be Farmer Brown's boy trying to break in. Jerry slipped down to the lower chamber of his house, which is under water, hurried out of the open door and then swam under the ice way across the Smiling Pool to his secret house in the bank. And though Jerry didn't know it, Peter Rabbit, looking down through the ice had seen him go.

Long after Jerry Muskrat had reached the safety of his secret house in the bank of the Smiling Pool, and was wondering if Farmer Brown's boy was tearing his house all to pieces, Peter Rabbit sat on the roof of Jerry's house enjoying himself. By and by Peter pricked up first one long ear and then the other. What was that noise? It sounded like—well, it sounded like someone splashing in water. Br-r-r! The very thought made Peter shiver. Splash! There it was again. Peter wouldn't have been Peter if he had sat still any longer. He just had to know what was going on.

The sound came from up the Laughing Brook. Half way across the Smiling Pool Peter stopped and sat up to make sure of just where the sound came from. Then he scampered across the ice and scrambled up on the bank. In a few minutes he began to go very slowly and carefully so as to make no noise.

Splash! Somebody certainly was having a good time in the Laughing Brook, just as if it was a hot summer day instead of the coldest one of winter so far. Peter very carefully parted the bushes and peeped through. There was Little Joe Otter climbing up the bank of the Laughing Brook at a place where the bank was low. Peter wondered if Little Joe had come over to see what was going on. Little Joe Otter ran along the bank to a place where it was very steep. Then he disappeared over the edge and just afterward Peter heard a big splash.

First Peter looked as if he couldn't believe his own eyes and his own ears. Then he looked a wee bit foolish, for suddenly he had remembered Little Joe Otter's slippery slide made of mud on the bank of the Smiling Pool in the summer. It must be that Little Joe had a new slippery slide. Now that he knew who it was Peter was no longer afraid, so he hopped out where he could see.

Little Joe Otter had just scrambled up the bank again and he saw Peter at once. "Come on, try my new slippery slide! It's great!" cried Little Joe, and down he shot head first into the black, cold-looking water of the Laughing Brook. In a minute his little brown head bobbed up. "Come on in, Peter!" he shouted.

Peter shivered at the thought. "No. I thank you; I'd rather watch you," replied Peter.

"Isn't it a dandy slide?" said Little Joe Otter, as he made ready for another plunge.

And indeed, it was! The water from Little Joe's coat had frozen on the snow and made the slide smooth and slippery. "Whee!" shouted Little Joe, and away he went down the slippery slide splash into the Laughing Brook. "Whee!" he shouted again as his head bobbed up and he began to swim for the bank, "Isn't winter great?"

(The Bedtime Story Calendar, # 8)

STORY 287. January 14, 1913

Peter Rabbit Gets a New Coat.

Now that snow covered all the Green Meadows and the Green Forest, Peter Rabbit found that he had a new worry. Peter isn't much given to worrying, but after two or three narrow escapes from fierce old Roughleg the Hawk, who had come from somewhere up north to spend the winter on the Green Meadows, and after he had found that though he was safe enough from old Granny Fox when he was in the dear old briar patch she could still see him as she prowled around the edge, Peter began to worry a little.

In the summer he had a thousand hiding places; but now that the leaves were gone his hiding places were gone, too; that is most of them were. Then, once he was really in the old briar patch, he was hidden from everybody, but now sharp eyes could look all through the briar patch. It hadn't been so bad when there was no snow on the ground, for Peter's coat was so nearly the color of the dry leaves that covered the ground that when he sat still it took very sharp eyes indeed to tell him from a little bunch of those same brown leaves. But now that everything was white, Peter's brown coat gave him away, and every time he went out for a walk he felt as if he looked as big as an elephant.

So Peter began to worry and lost his appetite. You know when Peter Rabbit loses his appetite there must be something very wrong with him. And he lost all his curiosity, and when Peter loses both his appetite and curiosity something is very, very wrong. He kept very, very close to the old briar patch and he grew thin, for there was very little to eat in the old briar patch. Peter Rabbit had begun to think that winter wasn't so fine after all.

One morning he got ready to start out for his breakfast. As usual he began to brush his clothes, for when he happens to think of it Peter can be very neat. The tail of his coat was quite white, and Peter, supposing that it was snow, brushed and brushed.

"What's the matter with it?" growled Peter, brushing away as hard as ever he could. But the tail of his coat remained as white as ever and, finally Peter looked at it more closely. There was no snow on it! The whiteness was in the coat itself! Peter's big eyes opened wider than ever, as a great hope grew and grew. What if his whole coat should turn white? It seemed too much to really hope for.

But Peter did hope, and every morning the first thing he did was to look at his coat, and every morning it seemed to him that his coat was a little bit whiter. Pretty soon he was sure of it. Then his trousers and his waistcoat began to grow white also,

and even his face and long ears. Finally Peter was so white² than when he ran the white patch that he had always worn on the seat of his pants didn't show at all, for, you see, the whole seat of his pants was white, too. And when Peter sat still, all humped up, he looked for all the world like nothing but a little mound of snow.

Then Peter Rabbit found once more
That he could hide just as before.
And Peter Rabbit's heart grew light
Because his suit was now of white.
He squalled, he hopped, he skipped, he danced
And forth once more he gayly pranced.

(*The Bedtime Story Calendar*, # 46, "Jumper the Hare Gets a New Coat.")

STORY 288. January 15, 1913

Old Roughleg's Eyes are Fooled.

Old Roughleg the Hawk sat on the top-most branch of a tall, dead maple tree in the middle of the Green Meadows. As far as he could see the world was white, and old Roughleg can see a great distance, for his eyes are very sharp. Rough Brother North Wind whooped and shouted across the Green Meadows and through the green forest. He snapped off the branches of trees just to show how strong he is, and caught up great handfuls of snow and tossed it in the air and blew it before him with icy breath.

But old Roughleg the Hawk minded him not at all, for he himself is fierce and strong and fears nothing but the dreadful gun of Farmer Brown's boy. So he sat on the top of the dead maple tree without moving. So still he sat that he seemed a part of the old dead tree itself, but his wonderful keen eyes never blinked and they never ceased watching the smooth white blanket that covered the Green Meadows. So sharp were they that it seemed to Danny Meadow Mouse in his warm nest of grass down underneath the snow that they could see right through the snow itself, and he shivered at the thought and decided not to take his usual morning exercise in the little tunnels he had made through the snow. You see he had peeped out very early that morning and had seen old Roughleg when he came to the dead maple tree, and he knew just what old Roughleg was sitting there so still for. He was waiting for his breakfast.

Yes, sir, that is just what old Roughleg was doing—waiting for his breakfast. He was hungry, was old Roughleg, and the longer he waited the hungrier he grew. But long ago, when he was young, he had learned to be patient. He had learned that so long as he sat perfectly still, careless little meadow people were apt not to notice him at all, or if they did, they soon forgot all about him and would show themselves, and then—why, old Roughleg never went hungry for very long.

But this morning he had made up his mind for a particularly good breakfast. He would have rabbit—Peter Rabbit³! For days and days, he had watched Peter hopping

2 All references to Peter Rabbit in this story were changed to Jumper the Hare when this story was reprinted in *The Bedtime Story Calendar*.

3 All references to Peter Rabbit in this story were changed to Jumper the Hare when this

about safe in the protection of the dear old briar patch. He knew that Peter often roamed abroad at night and that usually he came back to the old briar patch before daylight. But this morning Peter was not yet back. Old Roughleg was sure of it, for his sharp eyes had looked through and through the old briar patch and Peter was not in any of the places where he usually sat. So old Roughleg chuckled to himself and snapped his cruel hooked beak, which is his way of smacking his lips and waited and waited.

But the longer he waited, the hungrier he grew and the harder it was to be patient. Out on the meadows was a little mound of white, a funny little mound. He wondered what could have made it. "Must be a little bush underneath the snow," thought old Roughleg. By and by he could stand that hungry feeling no longer. "It's of no use," he muttered. "It must be that that rabbit isn't coming home this morning, and I shall have to go hunting for my breakfast after all."

So he spread his broad wings and sailed out over the meadows, right over that little mound of white, at which he looked sharply as he passed, and finally way out of sight beyond the Green Forest. No sooner was he out of sight than the queer little white mound came to life and stretched.

"My, I thought he never would go," said Peter Rabbit, and scampered over to the old briar patch, where he settled himself for a nap. "This white coat of mine is pretty nice; it fooled the sharp eyes of old Roughleg that time!" he murmured sleepily.

(The Bedtime Story Calendar, #47)

STORY 289. January 16, 1913

How Peter Rabbit Learned to Use His New Coat.

It was all due to Jumper the Hare that Peter Rabbit learned how to make the most of his new coat of pure white⁴. You know Jumper the Hare is Peter Rabbit's first cousin. Peter hadn't seen much of him since winter began, for Peter had kept pretty close to the dear, old briar patch, while Jumper liked the Green Forest best, trusting to his long legs to keep him out of danger. But when Peter got his new white coat he was so proud of it that right away he wanted to show it to his cousin, Jumper the Hare.

So the first moonlight night, off he started, lipperty-lipperty-lip, for the Green Forest. Almost right away he found Jumper's footprints. They were just like his own, only very much bigger. Peter scampered along as fast as he could go, looking eagerly for the brown figure of his big cousin. Just imagine how surprised Peter was when he heard a voice which seemed to come right out of a big snowball.

"Hello!" said the snowball. "It's about time you came to call on your neighbors, especially when one of them is your own cousin."

Peter stopped stock still and looked for all the world as if he thought himself dreaming and that presently he would wake up and find that it was not true. He stared

story was reprinted in *The Bedtime Story Calendar*.

4 When this story was reprinted as a single-story minibook in 1928, the Harrison Cady illustrations depicted Peter Rabbit with a white coat.

and stared and stared.

“Well, what’s the matter with you, Peter? Have you lost your tongue?” asked the snowball.

Just to show that he hadn’t lost his tongue Peter stuck it out. Then he found his voice and kicked up his heels as he shouted joyously:

“It’s you, Jumper! It’s you, isn’t it? And all the time I thought that you were nothing but a big snowball! Ho, ho, ho! That’s a joke on me!”

Jumper the Hare sat up straight and smiled. “Of course, it’s me!” said he. “I see you’ve put on your winter coat, Peter.”

“Yes,” Peter replied. “Isn’t it handsome?” He turned round and round so that Jumper the Hare could see it from all sides.

“Yes, it is handsome; it’s just like mine,” said Jumper the Hare. “I hope you know what it’s for.”

Peter looked a little wee bit puzzled. “Why, it’s to keep me warm, isn’t it?” he said.

“Warm and safe,” replied Jumper the Hare. “A brown coat, your old coat, would keep you just as warm as this, but with everything else so white you wouldn’t be safe at all.”

“I know that,” replied Peter, thinking of how he had not dared to go outside the briar patch for a long time. “Now I can hide in these snowy caves and no one will see me at all.”

“You can do more than that,” said Jumper the Hare. “You do not need to go into caves at all unless you want to. All you have to do is to sit perfectly still wherever you may be. As long as you don’t move the sharpest eyes will fail to see you, just as you didn’t see me, or didn’t know me when you did see me.”

“I am afraid that I should be so scared that I should move,” said Peter.

“You come with me and I’ll show you how to do it. It’s great fun!” said Jumper the Hare. And Peter Rabbit went.

(Published as a single-story book by John H. Eggers Co., 1928.)

STORY 290. January 17, 1913

A Great Joke on Jimmy Skunk.

Lipperty-lip away we go! away we go! away we go!
Lipperty-lip away we go across the white and shining snow!
Lipperty-lip in coats of white! in coats of white; in coats of white!
Lipperty-lip in coats of white we hide away when plain in sight!

Peter Rabbit and his big cousin, Jumper the Hare, were humming this together as they scampered through the Green Forest, which wasn’t green at all now, but

beautifully white with snow. Peter Rabbit felt very big and important as he hopped along close behind his big cousin, but all the time his heart was beating a wee bit faster than usual, and once in a while a funny little choky feeling would come into his throat and he would swallow hard. You see Peter had on a brand new coat of pure white⁵ and Jumper the Hare, who had a coat just like it, was going to show Peter how that beautiful white coat would keep him safe as well as warm. Right down inside Peter felt sure that he was going to have some adventures and that is why he had that queer choky feeling as he scampered along in the moonlight.

Pretty soon Jumper sat up very straight and, put a hand on his lips. Peter knew that this was a sign to keep very still. In a minute Peter saw Jimmy Skunk ambling along and talking to himself. Jumper the Hare looked to see which way Jimmy Skunk was going and then what do you think he did? Why he stole out and squatted all humped up right in Jimmy Skunk's path. Jumper laid his long ears flat on his shoulders and then he didn't move so much as an eye winker.

Up came Jimmy Skunk and glanced at that white heap in front of him. Then he turned out to go around it, all the time muttering to himself. "It's bad enough to cover everything up with this stuff without piling it up in front of a fellow when he goes out to walk," grumbled Jimmy Skunk.

"It's too bad about you, Jimmy," said Jumper the Hare, suddenly sitting up straight.

Jimmy Skunk was so surprised and so startled that he stuttered when he tried to speak. "Wha—what do you mean by trying to frighten people to death?" he demanded crossly, for you know it often makes people cross to be frightened.

"I don't see what you were frightened for; I was sitting right in plain sight all the time," replied Jumper the Hare.

Jimmy Skunk looked as if he felt foolish, but now that he had gotten over his scare he began to see the joke.

"The fact is, Jumper, I did see you and yet I didn't see you. I thought you were a little heap of snow like that one over by that pine tree," said Jimmy.

"Ha, ha, ha! So I was!" laughed Jumper the Hare.

"Ho, ho, ho! So he was!" shouted the little heap of snow over by the pine tree, and Peter Rabbit sat up so that he could better hold his sides while he laughed at Jimmy Skunk.

At first Jimmy Skunk's eyes looked as if they would pop right out of his head and then, because he really is a very good natured little fellow, he began to laugh, too. Suddenly he grew very sober and began to creep very softly over to a little white mound made by a little bush covered with snow. When he was close to it he suddenly

5 This was removed in the *Bedtime Calendar* version of the story.

shouted “Boo!”

“What did you do that for?” demanded Peter Rabbit.

“Just to make sure that it wouldn’t suddenly get up and laugh at me,” replied Jimmy Skunk with a twinkle in his eyes.

(The Bedtime Story Calendar, #2)

STORY 291. January 18, 1913

Peter Rabbit and Jumper the Hare Have Adventures.

By sitting perfectly still in their white coats⁶, Jumper the Hare and Peter Rabbit had just fooled Jimmy Skunk into thinking that they were two little mounds of snow.

“Now, you see how easy it is to hide and still be in plain sight,” said Jumper the Hare.

“Yes, I see,” replied Peter Rabbit. “We fooled Jimmy Skunk, but Jimmy isn’t as sharp-eyed as some folks. Besides, we weren’t afraid of Jimmy Skunk. Would you dare sit that way if old Granny Fox came along, Cousin Jumper?”

Now, Jumper the Hare is naturally very timid, oh, very timid, indeed. He is so very timid that some folks say that he is afraid of his own shadow, but, of course, that isn’t quite true. But when Peter Rabbit asked him that question, he drew himself up and swelled himself out to look as big and brave as possible and said: “I’ll show you, Cousin Peter! I’ll show you!”

Peter said nothing more, but in great admiration he followed at the heels of his big cousin, lipperty-lipperty-lip, through the Green Forest, which was no longer green, but white. Pretty soon they came to the edge of the forest, and whom should they see coming along the Lone Little Path but old Granny Fox and Reddy Fox. Peter’s heart gave a great jump of fright, but Jumper the Hare didn’t seem at all frightened. Right close at hand was a hollow log just about big enough for Peter to crawl into.

“You get in there and then you watch me,” said Jumper the Hare. “I’ll show you that it is just as easy to fool old Granny Fox as it is to fool Jimmy Skunk.” So Peter crawled into the hollow log, where he felt perfectly safe, and then he watched Jumper the Hare squat down on the snow a little to one side of the Lone Little Path, right in plain sight in the moonlight. He laid his long ears flat back on his shoulders and drew his head in close, and then sat perfectly still. Peter had to admit to himself that if he hadn’t known that it was Jumper he would never have thought of it being anything but a heap of snow.

Down the Lone Little Path came old Granny Fox and Reddy Fox, right past where Peter Rabbit was hiding. Their eyes looked yellow and hungry and made Peter shiver, for they looked so sharp that it seemed to him as if they must see right into the hollow log. Would they see Jumper the Hare? Peter held his breath. Down the Lone Little Path they trotted, stepping softly, oh, so softly, and peering under every bush and tree.

⁶ This was not corrected in the *Bedtime Calendar* version of the story.

Illustrations. January 13 to January 18, 1913.



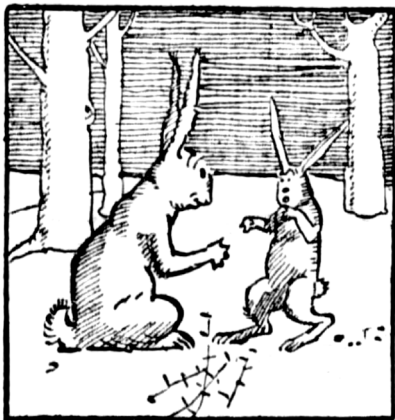
286. Little Joe Otter Has a Good Time



287. Peter Rabbit Gets a New Coat



288. Old Roughleg's Eyes are Fooled



289. How Peter Rabbit Learned to Use his New Coat



290. A Great Joke on Jimmy Skunk



291. Peter Rabbit and Jumper the Hare Have Adventures

Suddenly Reddy stopped and began to sniff. "I thought I smelled Hare," said he.

Old Granny Fox stopped and sniffed, too, but just then rough Brother North Wind flung a handful of snow in their faces, and when he had passed there was no smell of Hare. Nevertheless, Granny Fox looked more sharply than ever under every bush, and once she looked straight at Jumper the Hare sitting in the moonlight and Peter caught his breath with a little gulp. But all she saw was a little heap of snow, so on she went behind Reddy down into the meadows.

When they were out of sight Jumper the Hare stretched and yawned and then hopped over to where Peter Rabbit was waiting.

"My, how brave you are, Cousin Jumper!" cried Peter.

"Pooh! That's nothing! That's what I've got a white coat for—to keep me safe as well as warm," replied Jumper the Hare. "And it is to keep you safe as well as warm that you've got a white coat, too," he added.

And before he got home that night Peter was to find out that that was true.

(*The Bedtime Story Calendar*, #3, "Peter Rabbit and Jumper the Hare Have an Adventure.")

STORY 292. January 20, 1913

Peter Rabbit Learns to Sit Tight.

Peter Rabbit was hopping slowly along through the snow-covered Green Forest on his way back to the dear old briar patch. Peter was hopping slowly because he was thinking. He was thinking of all that his big cousin, Jumper the Hare, had taught him that night. They had had a great time together nearly all night and now it was almost morning and Peter was on his way home. Peter laughed aloud as he thought of how they had fooled Jimmy Skunk with their white coats⁷ so that he thought they were little heaps of snow. And he laughed again when he remembered how Granny and Reddy Fox had trotted right past Jumper the Hare without seeing him, although he was in plain sight.

"My, but Jumper was brave to sit still with old Granny Fox so near! I wonder if I could do it. Jumper says that the whole secret of fooling people is in sitting tight and I suppose he is right. But it must be dreadfully hard, oh, dreadfully hard, to sit perfectly still and not move the teeniest, weeniest bit when danger is so close at hand," thought Peter.

And then, right in the middle of his thoughts, broke a terrible sound, a sound that always made Peter shiver when he heard it, even when he knew that he was perfectly safe. It was the fierce hunting call of Hooty the Owl. Somehow in this clear, frosty air, it sounded to Peter fiercer and hungrier than usual. Perhaps that was because Peter was so far away from the dear old briar patch. He looked this way and he looked that way for a place to hide, but there was no place, no hole, no hollow log, not even one of the

⁷ Not corrected in *Bedtime Calendar* version.

many white caves made by the snow-covered branches of the hemlock trees, for these were in another part of the Green Forest.

Again Hooty the Owl hooted his fierce hunting call and this time it was so much nearer that Peter just got ready to run as fast as ever he could. And then, just as he was going to make the first jump, he looked up and saw a big shadow sail slowly from the top of a tall tree to the top of another tall tree where it sat so straight and still that if Peter hadn't seen it go there, he certainly would have thought it a part of the tree.

Peter changed his mind about running. Yes, sir, he changed his mind and he changed it mighty quick. He knew that that shadow was Hooty the Owl, and he knew that Hooty had not seen him yet. Into his head popped the warning of Jumper the Hare, which was to sit tight. So Peter sat tight. He crouched down as close to the snow as he could get and with his ears laid back he sat perfectly still, watching Hooty the Owl. And Hooty the Owl sat perfectly still on the top of the tall tree, watching and listening after each fierce hoot.

It seemed to Peter Rabbit, sitting there with his heart going thumpity-thump, thumpity-thump, that the great eyes of Hooty the Owl were looking right at him most of the time. And every time Hooty hooted, Peter had all he could do to keep from jumping. But he didn't. He sat tight and wished and wished that Hooty would get tired and go away. After a long time Hooty did spread his great wings and came sailing straight toward Peter. His wings didn't make a sound, as do the wings of other birds, and he seemed to drift just like a shadow straight toward Peter.

It was harder than ever to sit tight now, but Peter did, and Hooty the Owl sailed right over him without seeing him at all, although it seemed to Peter as if those fierce eyes looked right through him. When Peter was sure that Hooty was far away, he once more started for home, and he felt so good over the way in which he had fooled Hooty the Owl that he began to say over and over this foolish little verse:

When danger comes I just sit tight.
Wrapped in my little coat of white,
And sharp eyes come and sharp eyes go
And think I'm just a heap of snow.
I love my little coat of white
That keeps me safe when I sit tight.

(Bedtime Story Calendar, # 4)

STORY 293. January 21, 1913

Jerry Muskrat at Home.

All the time that Peter Rabbit and Jumper the Hare and Reddy Fox and old Granny Fox and other little forest people were running about on the beautiful white snow, when it was frozen, and through it when it was soft, and all the time that Johnny Chuck and Striped Chipmunk and Grandfather Frog and old Mr. Toad were sleeping the long winter away, Jerry Muskrat was living in a little world of his own. Where was he? Oh,

he was right at home in Smiling Pool.

Jerry thought it was a very nice little world. Perhaps that was because he had done so much himself to make that little world what it was. You know we always enjoy things most when we have done our share to get them. There was his house which he had built in the fall. Jerry was very proud of that house. He spent a great deal of his time curled up in the warm bed in the snug upper bedroom. He didn't care how cold it was outside or how snowy it was on how rough Brother North Wind might blow. He just didn't know anything about it. So he would lie there and dream dreams until he grew hungry and then he would yawn and stretch and slip down to his doorway and out into Smiling Pool to dig up a stout lily root.

It was a queer dim world down there under the ice of the frozen Smiling Pool, but Jerry liked it. In the first place it wasn't very, very cold one day and ever so much warmer the next day. It was always just the same. Peter Rabbit would have thought it dreadfully cold because you know, Peter's coat would have got wet through. But Jerry Muskrat's coat was waterproof and very, very warm so Jerry enjoyed swimming almost as much as he did in summer. Close up under the banks were places where he could get air when he needed it. Best of all he had a secret home way up under the roots of the big hickory tree on the bank of the Smiling Pool. It was warm and snug and dry and no one knew anything about it, not even-sharp eyed Billy Mink. A long tunnel led up to it and Jerry had so carefully hidden the entrance to this that no one had found it yet. He had many tunnels, had Jerry Muskrat, and the opening to this one was so far away from the snug home high in the bank that if you found it you never, never would have thought that the tunnel could possibly run way, way over to old hickory tree.

Jerry called that home in the bank his castle. He had food stored there and if anything should happen to his home in the Smiling Pool he had a place where he could feel perfectly safe.

Let winds blow high or winds blow low,
Come old Jack Frost with ice and snow,
No little bugs within a rug
Was ever warmer or more snug
Than Jerry Muskrat for, you know,
He'd everything to make him so.

Yes, sir, it seemed as if Jerry Muskrat really didn't have a thing to worry about. But everybody has troubles, even Jerry Muskrat. They came to him just when he least expected them and then he was glad, oh, so glad, that he had been shrewd enough to build his castle.

(The Bedtime Story Calendar, #49, "Jerry Muskrat's Winter Home.")

STORY 294. January 22, 1913

A Stranger Visits Jerry Muskrat's House.

One morning Jerry Muskrat awoke earlier than usual. You see Jerry was very lazy

these days. He had worked very hard in the summer and fall to build his splendid big house in the Smiling Pool and his secret castle under the roots of the old hickory tree, and now that it was winter and the Green Meadows were all white with snow and the Smiling Pool was covered with hard ice, Jerry felt that he had a right to be lazy. So he used to sleep late in the snug warm bedroom in the upper part of his house in the Smiling Pool. He had stored there a goodly supply of roots of the yellow water lily and so didn't have to get up for breakfast unless he felt like it.

But this particular morning Jerry Muskrat awoke early and for no reason in particular he didn't feel like lying abed. So, instead of eating breakfast in bed, like the gentleman of leisure that he could be if he wanted to, he decided to slip out and dig a fresh lily root and take it over to a snug little place he knew of where there was the nicest little air chamber close under the bank.

He was sitting there munching away on his lily root, and as happy and contented as could be, when he saw a brown body moving swiftly through the water in the Smiling Pool. Jerry knew right away what that brown body was. It was a mink. Jerry dropped his lily root and stared at that swiftly moving brown body until it had disappeared. It wasn't Billy Mink. He was sure of that because it was a great deal bigger than Billy Mink. Jerry grew very thoughtful. If it wasn't Billy Mink it must be a stranger and if it was a stranger—Jerry felt that cold, sinking feeling inside which is fear. You see, Jerry knew that some times in the winter when food is scarce and minks grow hungry and fierce if they are big enough, they sometimes kill and eat Muskrats.

Right away Jerry Muskrat lost his appetite. Where was that big Mink going? Jerry wanted to follow and see, but something inside whispered for him to sit still right where he was and wait. So Jerry waited and waited and the longer he waited the greater grew that little cold, sinking feeling inside. By and by Jerry saw that swift moving brown thing coming back. It moved just as swiftly as before, and it passed him without seeing him and disappeared in the direction of the Laughing Brook.

Jerry's heart went pit-a-pat-a-pit-a-pat
Oh, so still, and hardly breathing, Jerry sat!
Right inside him grew a feeling that was queer;
Jerry knew that it was something folks call fear.

After a long, long time Jerry felt sure that the stranger had gone away. He drew a long breath, and then, as fast as he could swim, he started for his house. He hurried in at the door way down under water and scrambled up into his snug, warm bedroom. My, my, my, what a sight! His bed was torn to pieces! His store of fat lily roots had been pulled this way and that, and were scattered all over the remains of his bed! Jerry sniffed once. Then he sniffed again. There was no mistaking that strong smell—it was Mink! The stranger had been to his house and Jerry knew what for. He had expected to find Jerry asleep there and if he had—Jerry shivered at the thought.

"This is no place for me," said Jerry, as he sadly looked about the ruin of his bedroom. "It's a good thing I built that castle under the roots of the old hickory tree, and the sooner I get there the better for me!"

And without waiting another minute Jerry Muskrat hurried to the hidden entrance to the long tunnel that led to his secret castle under the roots of the old hickory tree.

(The Bedtime Story Calendar # 50, "A stranger visits Jerry Muskrat's House")

STORY 295. January 23, 1913

Jerry Muskrat Fights for His Castle

Jerry Muskrat had not been near his house in the Smiling Pool for a whole week. In fact he had not been there since that never to be forgotten morning when he had found that a stranger, a big, fierce Mink, had been there while he was out. He thought about his house a great deal. Indeed, he didn't think of much of anything else as he lay snugly curled up in his castle under the roots of the big hickory tree on the bank of the Smiling Pool, his secret castle of which nobody knew.

It was very snug and comfortable, was that secret castle, and Jerry felt very safe there. But it wasn't quite so nice as that dear house he had worked so hard to build, and of which he had been so proud. Sometimes Jerry, who had grown very big and strong, felt just like going out and fighting that fierce stranger, but whenever he felt this way a little still voice inside him would repeat an old saying of Grandfather Frog's:

If you go hunting trouble
You'll find trouble right at hand;
It's folks who hunt for trouble
Who bring trouble to the land.

And right down in his heart, Jerry knew that, big and strong and brave as he felt, the stranger was even bigger and very much quicker and just as brave. So then Jerry, would think of another saying of Grandfather Frog's:

When you know trouble's banging round
Just keep out of sight,
And then if trouble finds you out
Just show how you can fight.

So Jerry Muskrat would sigh and snuggle down in his bed and try not to think about his house in the Smiling Pool. But at the end of a week, he could stand it no longer. He felt that he just had to know what was going on in the Smiling Pool. So he started down the long, secret tunnel from his castle to the middle of the Smiling Pool. Half-way there he heard a noise, a very little noise, somewhere in front of him. Jerry stopped and listened as hard as ever he could. There it was again! Someone had found his secret tunnel and was creeping along it as if they were not quite sure of where it might lead to.

Jerry didn't wait to hear any more or to see who his visitor might be. No, sir, Jerry didn't wait! He just hurried back to his castle and made ready to fight right in his doorway. Did Jerry Muskrat feel afraid? Perhaps he would have if he hadn't felt so angry that any one should dare to come stealing through his secret tunnel. He was too

angry to feel afraid.

Jerry didn't have long to wait. He had hardly made himself ready when there in the tunnel right in front of him appeared the big stranger Mink. His little eyes were red with the desire to kill and his lips were drawn back from his white teeth. But Jerry Muskrat's lips were drawn back, too, and those great, long front teeth of his with which he gnaws looked so dangerous that the stranger paused. Then he made a spring for Jerry's throat. But Jerry was too quick for him and he had a chance to feel how sharp those long teeth of Jerry's are. There wasn't much room in that tunnel and Jerry so blocked up the doorway to the castle that the stranger had no chance to get in, so that all that the stranger could do was to keep trying to spring at Jerry's throat and every time he did he felt Jerry's sharp teeth.

Now, if he could have gotten inside where there was room to twist and dodge this might have been a different story. But there in the tunnel the stranger could do little. But Jerry was quite at home there and little by little he drove the stranger back and back clear to the entrance of the tunnel, where the stranger turned tail and swam off toward the Laughing Brook, the worst whipped Mink who ever crossed the Smiling Pool.

And then if trouble finds you out
Just show how you can fight,

said Jerry Muskrat smiling to himself.

(The Bedtime Story Calendar, #51)

STORY 296. January 24, 1913

Danny Meadow Mouse Plays Hide and Seek

Life is always a game of hide-and-seek to Danny Meadow Mouse. You see, he is such a fat little fellow that there are a great many other furry-coated people, and almost as many who wear feathers, who would, if they could, gobble Danny up for breakfast or for dinner. Some of them pretend to be his friends, but Danny always keeps his eyes open when they are around and always begins to play hide and seek. Peter Rabbit and Jimmy Skunk and Striped Chipmunk and Happy Jack Squirrel are all friends whom he can trust, but he always has a bright twinkling eye open for Reddy Fox and Billy Mink and Shadow the Weasel and old Whitetail the Marsh Hawk, and several more, especially Hooty the Owl at night.

Now Danny Meadow Mouse is a stouthearted little fellow, and when rough Brother North Wind came shouting across the Green Meadows, tearing to pieces the snow clouds and shaking out the snowflakes until they covered the Green Meadows deep, deep, deep, Danny just snuggled down in his warm coat in his snug little house of grass and waited. Danny liked the snow. Yes, sir, Danny Meadow Mouse liked the snow. He just loved to dig in it and make tunnels. Through those tunnels in every direction, he could go where he pleased and when he pleased without being seen by anybody. It was great fun!

Every little way he made a little round doorway up the side of a stiff stalk of grass, out of which he could peep at the white world, and he could get the fresh, cold air. Sometimes, when he was quite sure that no one was around, he would scamper across on top of the snow from one doorway to another, and when he did this, he made the prettiest little footprints.

Now Reddy Fox knew all about those doorways and who made them. Reddy was having hard work to get enough to eat this cold weather, and he was hungry most of the time. One morning, as he came tiptoeing softly over the meadows, what should he see just ahead of him but the head of Danny Meadow Mouse pop out of one of those little round doorways. Reddy's mouth watered, and he stole forward more softly than ever. When he got within jumping distance, he drew his stout hind legs under him and made ready to spring. Presto! Danny Meadow Mouse had disappeared! Reddy Fox jumped just the same and began to dig as fast as he could make his paws go. He could smell Danny Meadow Mouse and that made him almost frantic.

All the time Danny Meadow Mouse was scurrying along one of his little tunnels, and when finally, Reddy Fox stopped digging because he was quite out of breath, Danny popped his head out of another little doorway and laughed at Reddy. Of course, Reddy saw him, and of course Reddy tried to catch him there, and dug frantically just as before. And of course, Danny Meadow Mouse wasn't there.

After a while Reddy Fox grew tired of this kind of a game and tried another plan. The next time he saw Danny Meadow Mouse stick his head out, Reddy pretended not to see him. He stretched himself out on the ground and made believe that he was very tired and sleepy. He closed his eyes. Then he opened them just the tiniest bit, so that he could see Danny Meadow Mouse and yet seem to be asleep. Danny watched him for a long time. Then he chuckled to himself and dropped out of sight.

No sooner was he gone than Reddy Fox stole over close to the little doorway and waited. "He'll surely stick his head out again to see if I'm asleep, and then I'll have him," said Reddy to himself. So he waited and waited and waited. By and by he turned his head. There was Danny Meadow Mouse at another little doorway, laughing at him!

(The Adventures of Danny Meadow Mouse, Chapter 3, "Danny Meadow Mouse Plays Hide-and-Seek")

STORY 297. January 25, 1913

Old Granny Fox Tries for Danny Meadow Mouse.

Danny Meadow Mouse had not enjoyed anything so much for a long time as he did that game of hide and seek, which he had been playing with Reddy Fox. He tickled and chuckled all the afternoon as he thought about it. Of course, Reddy had been "it." He had been "it" all the time, for never once had he caught Danny Meadow Mouse. If he had—well, there wouldn't have been any more stories about Danny Meadow Mouse, because there wouldn't have been any Danny Meadow Mouse any more.

But Danny never let himself think about this. He had enjoyed the game all the

Illustrations. January 20 to January 25, 1913.



292. Peter Rabbit Learns to Sit Tight



293. Jerry Muskrat at Home



294. A Stranger Visits Jerry Muskrat's House



295. Jerry Muskrat Fights for His Castle



296. Danny Meadow Mouse Plays Hide and Seek



297. Old Granny Fox Tries for Danny Meadow Mouse

more because it had been such a dangerous game. It had been such fun to dive into one of his little round doorways in the snow, run along one of his own little tunnels, and then peep out at another doorway and watch Reddy Fox digging as fast as ever he could at the doorway Danny had just left. Finally, Reddy had given up in disgust and gone off muttering angrily to try to find something else for dinner. Danny had sat up on the snow and watched him go. In his funny little squeaky voice Danny shouted:

“Though Reddy Fox is smart and sly,
Hi-hum-diddle-de-o!
I’m just as smart and twice as sly.
Hi-hum-diddle-de-o!”

That night Reddy Fox told old Granny Fox all about how he had tried to catch Danny Meadow Mouse. Granny listened with her head cocked on one side. When Reddy told how fat Danny Meadow Mouse was, her mouth watered, for you see, now that snow covered the Green Meadows and the Green Forest, Granny and Reddy Fox had hard work to get enough to eat, and they were hungry most of the time.

“I’ll go with you down on the meadows tomorrow morning, and then we’ll see if Danny Meadow Mouse is as smart as he thinks he is,” said Granny Fox.

So, bright and early the next morning, old Granny Fox and Reddy Fox went down on the meadows where Danny Meadow Mouse lives. Danny had felt in his bones that Reddy would come back, so he was watching, and he saw them as soon as they came out of the Green Forest. When he saw old Granny Fox, Danny’s heart beat a little faster than before, for he knew that Granny Fox is very smart and very wise, and has learned most of the tricks of all the other little meadow and forest people.

“This is going to be a more exciting game than the other,” said Danny to himself, and scurried down out of sight to see that all his little tunnels were clear so that he could run fast through them if he had to. Then he peeped out of one of his little doorways hidden in a clump of tall grass.

Old Granny Fox set Reddy to hunting for Danny’s little round doorways, and as fast as he found them, Granny came up and sniffed at each. She knew that she could tell by the smell which one he had been at last. Finally, she came straight toward the tall bunch of grass. Danny ducked down and scurried along one of his little tunnels. He heard Granny Fox sniff at the doorway he had just left. Suddenly something plunged down through the snow right at his very heels. Danny didn’t have to look to know that it was Granny Fox herself, and he squeaked with fright.

(The Adventures of Danny Meadow Mouse, Chapter 4)

STORY 298. January 27, 1913

What Happened on the Green Meadows.

Thick and fast, things were happening to Danny Meadow Mouse down on the snow-covered Green Meadows. Rather, they were almost happening. He hadn’t minded

when Reddy Fox all alone tried to catch him. Indeed, he had made a regular game of hide and seek of it and had enjoyed it immensely. But now it was different. You see, Reddy had brought old Granny Fox with him this time. Granny Fox wasn't so easily fooled as Reddy Fox. Just that alone would have made it a dangerous game for Danny Meadow Mouse. But Reddy was with her, and so Danny had two to look out for, and he got so many frights that it seemed to him as if his heart had moved right up into his mouth and was going to stay there. Yes, sir, that is just how it seemed.

Down in his little tunnels underneath the snow Danny Meadow Mouse felt perfectly safe from Reddy Fox, who would stop and dig frantically at the little round doorway where he had last seen Danny. But old Granny Fox knew all about those little tunnels, and she didn't waste any time digging at the doorways. Instead, she cocked her sharp little ears and listened with all her might. Now Granny Fox has very keen ears, oh, very keen ears, and she heard just what she hoped she would hear. She heard Danny Meadow Mouse running along one of his little tunnels under the snow.

Plunge! Old Granny Fox dived right into the snow and right through into the tunnel of Danny Meadow Mouse. Her two black paws actually touched Danny's tail.

"Ha!" cried Granny Fox, "I almost got him that time!"

Then she ran ahead a little way over the snow, listening as before. Plunge! Into the snow she went again. It was lucky for him that Danny had just turned into another tunnel, for otherwise she would surely have caught him. Granny Fox blew the snow out of her nose. "Next time I'll get him!" said she.

Now Reddy Fox is quick to learn, especially when it is a way to get something to eat. He watched Granny Fox, and when he understood what she was doing, he made up his mind to have a try himself, for he was afraid that if she caught Danny Meadow Mouse, she would think that he was not big enough to divide. Perhaps that was because Reddy is very selfish himself. So the next time Granny plunged into the snow and missed Danny Meadow Mouse just as before, Reddy rushed in ahead of her, and the minute he heard Danny running down below, he plunged in just as he had seen Granny do. But he didn't take the pains to make sure of just where Danny was, and so of course he didn't come anywhere near him. Instead he frightened Danny still more and made old Granny Fox lose her temper.

Poor Danny Meadow Mouse! He had never been so frightened in all his life. He didn't know which way to turn or where to run. And so he sat still, which, although he didn't know it, was the very best thing he could do. When he sat still, he made no noise, and so of course Granny and Reddy Fox could not tell where he was. Old Granny Fox sat and listened and listened and listened, and wondered where Danny Meadow Mouse was. And down under the snow Danny Meadow Mouse sat and listened and listened and listened, and wondered where Granny and Reddy Fox were.

"Pooh!" said Granny Fox after a while, "that Meadow Mouse thinks he can fool me by sitting still. I'll give him a scare."

Then she began to plunge into the snow this way and that way, and sure enough, pretty soon she landed so close to Danny Meadow Mouse that one of her claws

scratched him.

(The Adventures of Danny Meadow Mouse, Chapter 5)

STORY 299. January 28, 1913

Danny Meadow Mouse Remembers and Reddy Fox Forgets

There he goes!" cried old Granny Fox. "Don't let him sit still again!"

"I hear him!" shouted Reddy Fox, and plunged down into the snow just as Granny Fox had done a minute before. But he didn't catch anything, and when he had blown the snow out of his nose and wiped it out of his eyes, he saw Granny Fox dive into the snow with no better luck.

"Never mind," said Granny Fox, "as long as we keep him running, we can hear him, and some one of these times we'll catch him. He'll get too tired to be so spry, and when he is—" Granny didn't finish, but licked her chops and smacked her lips. Reddy Fox grinned, then licked his chops and smacked his lips. Then once more they took turns diving into the snow.

And down underneath in the little tunnels he had made, Danny Meadow Mouse was running for his life. He was getting tired, just as old Granny Fox had said he would. He was almost out of breath. He was sore and one leg smarted, for in one of her jumps old Granny Fox had so nearly caught him that her claws had torn his pants and scratched him.

"Oh dear! Oh dear! If only I had time to think!" panted Danny Meadow Mouse, and then he squealed in still greater fright as Reddy Fox crashed down into his tunnel right at his very heels. "I've got to get somewhere! I've got to get somewhere where they can't get at me!" he sobbed. And right that very instant he remembered the old fence post!

The old fence post lay on the ground and was hollow. Fastened to it were long wires with sharp, cruel barbs. Danny had made a tunnel over to that old fence post the very first day after the snow came, for in that hollow in the old post he had a secret store of seeds. Why hadn't he thought of it before? It must have been because he was too frightened to think. But he remembered now, and he dodged into the tunnel that led to the old fence post, running faster than ever, for though his heart was in his mouth from fear, in his heart was hope, and hope is a wonderful thing.

Now old Granny Fox knew all about that old fence post and she remembered all about those barbed wires fastened to it. Although they were covered with snow she knew just about where they lay, and just before she reached them, she stopped plunging down into the snow. Reddy Fox knew about those wires, too, but he was so excited that he forgot all about them.

"Stop!" cried old Granny Fox sharply.

But Reddy Fox didn't hear, or if he heard he didn't heed. His sharp ears could hear Danny Meadow Mouse running almost underneath him. Granny Fox could stop if she wanted to, but he was going to have Danny Meadow Mouse for his breakfast! Down into the snow he plunged as hard as ever he could.

"Oh! Oh! Wow! Wow! Oh dear! Oh dear!"

That wasn't the voice of Danny Meadow Mouse. Oh, my, no! It was the voice of Reddy Fox. Yes, sir, it was the voice of Reddy Fox. He had landed with one of his black paws right on one of those sharp wire barbs, and it did hurt dreadfully.

"I never did know a young Fox who could get into as much trouble as you can!" snapped old Granny Fox, as Reddy hobbled along on three legs behind her, across the snow-covered Green Meadows. "It serves you right for forgetting!"

"Yes'm," said Reddy meekly.

And safe in the hollow of the old fence post, Danny Meadow Mouse was dressing the scratch on his leg made by the claws of old Granny Fox.

(The Adventures of Danny Meadow Mouse, Chapter 6)

STORY 300. January 29, 1913

Old Granny Fox Tries a New Plan.

Old Granny Fox kept thinking about Danny Meadow Mouse. She knew that he was fat, and it made her mouth water every time she thought of him. She made up her mind that she must and would have him. She knew that Danny had been very, very much frightened when she and Reddy Fox had tried so hard to catch him by plunging down through the snow into his little tunnels after him, and she felt pretty sure that he wouldn't go far away from the old fence post, in the hollow of which he was snug and safe.

But Old Granny Fox is very smart. "Danny Meadow Mouse won't put his nose out of that old fence post for a day or two. Then he'll get tired of staying inside all the time, and he'll peep out of one of his little round doorways to see if the way is clear. If he doesn't see any danger, he'll come out and run around on top of the snow to get some of the seeds in the tops of the tall grasses that stick out through the snow. If nothing frightens him, he'll keep going a little farther and a little farther from that old fence post. I must see to it that Danny Meadow Mouse isn't frightened for a few days." So said old Granny Fox to herself, as she lay under a hemlock tree, studying how she could best get the next meal.

Then she called Reddy Fox to her and forbade him to go down on the meadows until she should tell him he might. Reddy grumbled and mumbled and didn't see why he shouldn't go where he pleased, but he didn't dare disobey. You see, he had a sore foot. He had hurt it on a wire barb when he was plunging through the snow after Danny Meadow Mouse, and now he had to run on three legs. That meant that he must depend upon Granny Fox to help him get enough to eat. So Reddy didn't dare to disobey.

It all came out just as Granny Fox had thought it would. Danny Meadow Mouse did get tired of staying in the old fence post. He did peep out first, and then he did run a little way on the snow, and then a little farther and a little farther. But all the time he took great care not to get more than a jump or two from one of his little round doorways leading down to his tunnels under the snow.

Hidden on the edge of the Green Forest, Granny Fox watched him. She looked up at the sky, and she knew that it was going to snow again. "That's good," said she. "Tomorrow morning I'll have fat Meadow Mouse for breakfast," and she smiled a hungry smile.

The next morning, before jolly, round, red Mr. Sun was out of bed, old Granny Fox trotted down onto the meadows and straight over to where, down under the snow, lay the old fence post. It had snowed again, and all the little doorways of Danny Meadow Mouse were covered up with soft, fleecy snow. Behind Granny Fox limped Reddy Fox, grumbling to himself.

When they reached the place where the old fence post lay buried under the snow, old Granny Fox stretched out as flat as she could. Then she told Reddy to cover her up with the new soft snow. Reddy did as he was told, but all the time he grumbled. "Now you go off to the Green Forest and keep out of sight," said Granny Fox. "By and by I'll bring you some Meadow Mouse for your breakfast," and Granny Fox chuckled to think how smart she was and how she was going to catch Danny Meadow Mouse.

(The Adventures of Danny Meadow Mouse, Chapter 7)

STORY 301. January 30, 1913

Brother North Wind Proves a Friend.

Danny Meadow Mouse had seen nothing of old Granny Fox or Reddy Fox for several days. Every morning the first thing he did, even before he had breakfast, was to climb up to one of his little round doorways and peep out over the beautiful white meadows, to see if there was any danger near.

But every time he did this, Danny used a different doorway. "For," said Danny to himself, "if anyone should happen, just happen, to see me this morning, they might be waiting just outside my doorway to catch me tomorrow morning." You see, there is a great deal of wisdom in the little head that Danny Meadow Mouse carries on his shoulders.

But the first day and the second day and the third day he saw nothing of old Granny Fox or of Reddy Fox, and he began to enjoy running through his tunnels under the snow and scurrying across from one doorway to another on top of the snow, just as he had before the Foxes had tried so hard to catch him. But he hadn't forgotten, as Granny Fox had hoped he would. No, indeed, Danny Meadow Mouse hadn't forgotten. He was too wise for that.

One morning, when he started to climb up to one of his little doorways, he found

that it was closed. Yes, sir, it was closed. In fact, there wasn't any doorway. More snow had fallen from the clouds in the night and had covered up every one of the little round doorways of Danny Meadow Mouse.

"Ha!" said Danny, "I shall have a busy day, a very busy day, opening all my doorways. I'll eat my breakfast, and then I'll go to work."

So Danny Meadow Mouse ate a good breakfast of seeds which he had stored in the hollow in the old fence post buried under the snow, and then he began work on the nearest doorway. It really wasn't work at all, for you see, the snow was soft and light, and Danny dearly loved to dig in it. In a few minutes he had made a wee hole through which he could peep up at jolly, round, red Mr. Sun. In a few minutes more he had made it big enough to put his head out. He looked this way and he looked that way. Far, far off on the top of a tree he could see old Roughleg the Hawk, but he was so far away that Danny didn't fear him at all.

"I don't see anything or anybody to be afraid of," said Danny and poked his head out a little farther.

Then he sat and studied everything around him a long, long time. It was a beautiful white world, a very beautiful white world. Everything was so white and pure and beautiful that it didn't seem possible that harm or danger for anyone could even be thought of. But Danny Meadow Mouse learned long ago that things are not always what they seem, and so he sat with just his little head sticking out of his doorway and studied and studied. Just a little way off was a little heap of snow.

"I don't remember that," said Danny. "And I don't remember anything that would make that. There isn't any little bush or old log or anything underneath it. Perhaps rough Brother North Wind heaped it up, just for fun."

But all the time Danny Meadow Mouse kept studying and studying that little heap of snow. Pretty soon he saw rough Brother North Wind coming his way and tossing the snow about as he came. He caught a handful from the top of the little heap of snow that Danny was studying, and when he had passed, Danny's sharp eyes saw something red there. It was just the color of the cloak old Granny Fox wears.

"Granny Fox, you can't fool me!
I see you plain as plain can be!"

shouted Danny Meadow Mouse and dropped down out of sight, while old Granny Fox shook the snow from her red cloak and, with a snarl of disappointment and anger, slowly started for the Green Forest, where Reddy Fox was waiting for her.

(The Adventures of Danny Meadow Mouse, Chapter 8)

STORY 302. January 31, 1913

Caught at Last.

"Tippy-tippy-tippy-toe,

Play and frolic in the snow!
Now you see me! Now you don't!
Think you'll catch me, but you won't!
Tippy-toppy-tippy-toe,
Oh, such fun to play in snow!"

Danny Meadow Mouse sang this, or at least he tried to sing it, as he skipped about on the snow that covered the Green Meadows. But Danny Meadow Mouse has such a little voice, such a funny little squeaky voice, that had you been there you probably would never have guessed that he was singing. He thought he was, though, and was enjoying it just as much as if he had the most beautiful voice in the world. You know, singing is nothing in the world but happiness in the heart making itself heard.

Oh, yes, Danny Meadow Mouse was happy! Why shouldn't he have been? Hadn't he proved himself smarter than old Granny Fox? That is something to make anyone happy. Some folks may fool Granny Fox once; some may fool her twice; but there are very few who can keep right on fooling her until she gives up in disgust. That is just what Danny Meadow Mouse had done, and he felt very smart and of course he felt very happy.

So Danny sang his little song and skipped about in the moonlight, and dodged in and out of his little round doorways, and all the time kept his sharp little eyes open for any sign of Granny Fox or Reddy Fox. But with all his smartness, Danny forgot. Yes, sir, Danny forgot one thing. He forgot to watch up in the sky. He knew that of course old Roughleg the Hawk was asleep, so he had nothing to fear from him. But he never once thought of Hooty the Owl.

Dear me, dear me! Forgetting is a dreadful habit. If nobody ever forgot, there wouldn't be nearly so much trouble in the world. No, indeed, there wouldn't be nearly so much trouble. And Danny Meadow Mouse forgot. He skipped and sang and was happy as could be, and never once thought to watch up in the sky.

Over in the Green Forest Hooty the Owl had had poor hunting, and he was feeling cross. You see, Hooty was hungry, and hunger is apt to make one feel cross. The longer he hunted, the hungrier and crosser he grew. Suddenly he thought of Danny Meadow Mouse.

"I suppose he is asleep somewhere safe and snug under the snow," grumbled Hooty, "but he might, he just might, be out for a frolic in the moonlight. I believe I'll go down on the meadows and see."

Now Hooty the Owl can fly without making the teeniest, weeniest sound. It seems as if he just drifts along through the air like a great shadow. Now he spread his great wings and floated out over the meadows. You know Hooty can see as well at night as most folks can by day, and it was not long before he saw Danny Meadow Mouse skipping about on the snow and dodging in and out of his little round doorways. Hooty's great eyes grew brighter and fiercer. Without a sound he floated through the moonlight until he was just over Danny Meadow Mouse.

Too late Danny looked up. His little song ended in a tiny squeak of fear, and he

started for his nearest little round doorway. Hooty the Owl reached down with his long cruel claws and—Danny Meadow Mouse was caught at last!

(*The Adventures of Danny Meadow Mouse*, Chapter 9, “Danny Meadow Mouse is Caught at Last”)

STORY 303. February 1, 1913

A Strange Ride and How it Ended

Danny Meadow Mouse often had sat watching Skimmer the Swallow sailing around up in the blue, blue sky. He had watched Ol’ Mistah Buzzard go up, up, up, until he was nothing but a tiny speck, and Danny had wondered how it would seem to be way up above the Green Meadows and the Green Forest and look down. It had seemed to him that it must be very wonderful and beautiful. Sometimes he had wished that he had wings and could go up in the air and look down. And now here he was, he, Danny Meadow Mouse, actually doing that very thing!

But Danny could see nothing wonderful or beautiful now. No, indeed! Everything was terrible, for you see, Danny Meadow Mouse wasn’t flying himself. He was being carried. Yes, sir, Danny Meadow Mouse was being carried through the air in the cruel claws of Hooty the Owl! And all because Danny had forgotten—forgotten to watch up in the sky for danger. He had sat on the snow in the moonlight thinking how smart he was to fool old Granny Fox and had never once thought of Hooty the Owl. And Hooty, sailing through the moonlight like a great shadow, for his wings make no sound, had spied him there and had caught him.

Poor, poor Danny Meadow Mouse! Hooty’s great cruel claws hurt him dreadfully! But it wasn’t the pain that was the worst. No, indeed! It wasn’t the pain! It was the thought of what would happen when Hooty reached his home in the Green Forest, for he knew that there Hooty would gobble him up, bones and all. As he flew, Hooty kept chuckling, and Danny Meadow Mouse knew just what those chuckles meant. They meant that Hooty was thinking of the good meal he was going to have.

Hanging there in Hooty’s great cruel claws, Danny looked down on the snow-covered Green Meadows he loved so well. They seemed a frightfully long way below him, though really they were not far at all, for Hooty was flying very low. But Danny Meadow Mouse had never in all his life been so high up before, and so it seemed to him that he was way, way up in the sky, and he shut his eyes so as not to see. But he couldn’t keep them shut. No, sir, he couldn’t keep them shut! He just had to keep opening them. There was the dear old Green Forest drawing nearer and nearer. It always had looked very beautiful to Danny Meadow Mouse, but now it looked terrible, very terrible indeed, because over in it, hidden away there in some dark place, was the home of Hooty the Owl.

Just ahead of him was the old briar patch where Peter Rabbit lives so safely. Every old bramble in it was covered with snow and it was very, very beautiful. Really everything was just as beautiful as ever—the moonlight, the Green Forest, the snow-

Illustrations. January 27 to February 1, 1913.



298. What Happened on the Green Meadows



299. Danny Meadow Mouse Remembers and Reddy Fox Forgets



300. Old Granny Fox Tries a New Plan



301. Brother North Wind Proves a Friendt



302. Caught at Last



303. A Strange Ride and How it Ended

covered Green Meadows, the old briar patch. The only change was in Danny Meadow Mouse himself, and it was all because he had forgotten.

Suddenly Danny began to wriggle and struggle. “Keep still!” snapped Hooty the Owl.

But Danny only struggled harder than ever. It seemed to him that Hooty wasn’t holding him as tightly as at first. He felt one of Hooty’s claws slip. It tore his coat and hurt dreadfully, but it slipped! The fact is, Hooty had only grabbed Danny Meadow Mouse by the loose part of his coat, and up in the air he couldn’t get hold of Danny any better. Danny kicked, squirmed, and twisted, and twisted, squirmed, and kicked. He felt his coat tear and of course the skin with it, but he kept right on, for now he was hanging almost free. Hooty had started down now, so as to get a better hold. Danny gave one more kick and then—he felt himself falling!

Danny Meadow Mouse shut his eyes and held his breath. Down, down, down he fell. It seemed to him that he never would strike the snow-covered meadows! Really, he fell only a very little distance. But it seemed a terrible distance to Danny. He hit something that scratched him, and then—plump!—he landed in the soft snow right in the very middle of the old briar patch, and the last thing he remembered was hearing the scream of disappointment and rage of Hooty the Owl.

(The Adventures of Danny Meadow Mouse, Chapter 10)

STORY 304. February 3, 1913

Peter Rabbit Gets a Fright.

Peter Rabbit sat in his favorite place in the middle of the dear old briar patch, trying to decide which way he would go on his travels that night. The night before he had had a narrow escape from old Granny Fox over in the Green Forest. There was nothing to eat around the Smiling Pool and no one to talk to there anymore, and you know that Peter must either eat or ask questions in order to be perfectly happy. No, the Smiling Pool was too dull a place to interest Peter on such a beautiful moonlight night, and Peter had no mind to try his legs against those of old Granny Fox again in the Green Forest.

Early that morning, just after Peter had settled down for his morning nap, Tommy Tit the Chickadee had dropped into the dear old briar patch just to be neighborly. Peter was just dozing off when he heard the cheeriest little voice in the world. It was saying:

“Dee-dee-chickadee!

I see you! Can you see me?”

Peter began to smile even before he could get his eyes open and look up. There, right over his head, was Tommy Tit hanging head down from a nodding old bramble. In a twinkling he was down on the snow right in front of Peter, then up in the brambles again, right side up, upside down, here, there, everywhere, never still a minute, and all the time chattering away in the cheeriest little voice in the world:

“Dee-dee-chickadee!
I’m as happy as can be!
Find it much the better way
To be happy all the day.
Dee-dee-chickadee!
Everybody’s good to me!”

“Hello, Tommy!” said Peter Rabbit. “Where’d you come from?”

“From Farmer Brown’s new orchard up on the hill. It’s a fine orchard, Peter Rabbit, a fine orchard. I go there every morning for my breakfast. If the winter lasts long enough, I’ll have all the trees cleaned up for Farmer Brown.”

Peter looked puzzled. “What do you mean?” he asked.

“Just what I say,” replied Tommy Tit, almost turning a somersault in the air. “There’s a million eggs of insects on those young peach trees, but I’m clearing them all off as fast as I can. They’re mighty fine eating, Peter Rabbit, mighty fine eating!” And with that Tommy Tit had said good-bye and flitted away.

Peter was thinking of that young orchard now, as he sat in the moonlight trying to make up his mind where to go. The thought of those young peach trees made his mouth water. It was a long way up to the orchard on the hill, a very long way, and Peter was wondering if it really was safe to go. He had just about made up his mind to try it, for Peter is very, very fond of the bark of young peach trees, when thump! something dropped out of the sky at his very feet.

It startled Peter so that he nearly tumbled over backward. And right at the same instant came the fierce, angry scream of Hooty the Owl. That almost made Peter’s heart stop beating, although he knew that Hooty couldn’t get him down there in the old briar patch. When Peter got his wits together and his heart didn’t go so jumpy, he looked to see what had dropped so close to him out of the sky. His big eyes grew bigger than ever, and he rubbed them to make quite sure that he really saw what he thought he saw. Yes, there was no doubt about it—there at his feet lay Danny Meadow Mouse!

(The Adventures of Danny Meadow Mouse, Chapter 11)

STORY 305. February 4, 1913

Old Briar Patch Has a New Tenant.

Danny Meadow Mouse slowly opened his eyes and then closed them again quickly, as if afraid to look around. He could hear someone talking. It was a pleasant voice, not at all like the terrible voice of Hooty the Owl, which was the very last thing that Danny Meadow Mouse could remember. Danny lay still a minute and listened.

“Why, Danny Meadow Mouse, where in the world did you drop from?” asked the voice. It sounded like—why, very much like Peter Rabbit speaking. Danny opened his eyes again. It was Peter Rabbit.

“Where—where am I?” asked Danny Meadow Mouse in a very weak and small voice.

“In the middle of the dear old briar patch with me,” replied Peter Rabbit. “But how did you get here? You seemed to drop right out of the sky.”

Danny Meadow Mouse shuddered. Suddenly he remembered everything—how Hooty the Owl had caught him in great cruel claws and had carried him through the moonlight across the snow-covered Green Meadows; how he had felt Hooty’s claws slip and then had struggled and kicked and twisted and turned until his coat had torn and he had dropped down, down, down, until he had landed in the soft snow and knocked all the breath out of his little body. The very last thing he could remember was Hooty’s fierce scream of rage and disappointment. Danny shuddered again.

Then a new thought came to him. He must get out of sight! Hooty might catch him again! Danny tried to scramble to his feet.

“Ooch! Oh!” groaned Danny and lay still again.

“There, there. Keep still, Danny Meadow Mouse. There’s nothing to be afraid of here,” said Peter Rabbit gently. His big eyes filled with tears as he looked at Danny Meadow Mouse, for Danny was all torn and hurt by the cruel claws of Hooty the Owl, and you know Peter has a very tender heart.

So Danny lay still, and while Peter Rabbit tried to make him comfortable and dress his hurts, he told Peter all about how he had forgotten to watch up in the sky and so had been caught by Hooty the Owl, and all about his terrible ride in Hooty’s cruel claws.

“Oh dear, whatever shall I do now?” he ended. “However shall I get back home to my warm house of grass, my safe little tunnels under the snow, and my little store of seeds in the snug hollow in the old fence post?”

Peter Rabbit looked thoughtful. “You can’t do it,” said he. “You simply can’t do it. It is such a long way for a little fellow like you that it wouldn’t be safe to try. If you went at night, Hooty the Owl might catch you again. If you tried in daylight, old Roughleg the Hawk would be almost sure to see you. And night or day, old Granny Fox or Reddy Fox might come snooping around, and if they did, they would be sure to catch you. I tell you what, you stay right here! The dear old briar patch is the safest place in the world. Why, just think, here you can come out in broad daylight and laugh at Granny and Reddy Fox and at old Roughleg the Hawk, because the good old brambles will keep them out if they try to get you. You can make just as good tunnels under the snow here as you had there, and there are lots and lots of seeds on the ground to eat. You know I don’t care for them myself. I’m lonesome sometimes, living here all alone. You stay here, and we’ll have the old briar patch to ourselves.”

Danny Meadow Mouse looked at Peter gratefully. “I will, and thank you ever so much, Peter Rabbit,” he said.

And this is how the dear old briar patch happened to have another tenant.

(The Adventures of Danny Meadow Mouse, Chapter 12)

Peter Rabbit Visits the Peach Orchard.

Don't go, Peter Rabbit! Don't go!" begged Danny Meadow Mouse.

Peter hopped to the edge of the old briar patch and looked over the moonlit, snow-covered meadows to the hill back of Farmer Brown's house. On that hill was the young peach orchard of which Tommy Tit the Chickadee had told him, and ever since Peter's mouth had watered and watered every time he thought of those young peach trees and the tender bark on them.

"I think I will, Danny, just this once," said Peter. "It's a long way, and I've never been there before; but I guess it's just as safe as the Meadows or the Green Forest."

"Oh I'm as bold as bold can be!
Sing hoppy-hippy-hippy-hop-o!
I'll hie me forth the world to see!
Sing hoppy-hippy-hippy-hop-o!
My ears are long,
My legs are strong,
So now good day;
I'll hie away!
Sing hoppy-hippy-hippy-hop-o!"

And with that, Peter Rabbit left the dear, safe old briar patch, and away he went lipperty-lipperty-lip, across the Green Meadows toward the hill and the young orchard back of Farmer Brown's house.

Danny Meadow Mouse watched him go and shook his head in disapproval. "Foolish, foolish, foolish!" he said over and over to himself. "Why can't Peter be content with the good things that he has?"

Peter Rabbit hurried along through the moonlight, stopping every few minutes to sit up to look and listen. He heard the fierce hunting call of Hooty the Owl way over in the Green Forest, so he felt sure that at present there was nothing to fear from him. He knew that since their return to the Green Meadows and the Green Forest, Granny and Reddy Fox had kept away from Farmer Brown's, so he did not worry about them.

All in good time Peter came to the young orchard. It was just as Tommy Tit the Chickadee had told him. Peter hopped up to the nearest peach tree and nibbled the bark. My, how good it tasted! He went all around the tree, stripping off the bark. He stood up on his long hind legs and reached as high as he could. Then he dug the snow away and ate down as far as he could. When he could get no more tender young bark, he went on to the next tree.

Now, though Peter didn't know it, he was in the very worst kind of mischief. You see, when he took off all the bark all the way around the young peach tree, he killed the tree, for you know it is on the inside of the bark that the sap which gives life to a tree and makes it grow goes up from the roots to all the branches. So when Peter ate the

bark all the way around the trunk of the young tree, he had made it impossible for the sap to come up in the spring. Oh, it was the worst kind of mischief that Peter Rabbit was in.

But Peter didn't know it, and he kept right on filling that big stomach of his and enjoying it so much that he forgot to watch out for danger. Suddenly, just as he had begun on another tree, a great roar right behind him made him jump almost out of his skin. He knew that voice, and without waiting to even look behind him, he started for the stone wall on the other side of the orchard. Right at his heels, his great mouth wide open, was Bowser the Hound.

(The Adventures of Danny Meadow Mouse, Chapter 13)

STORY 307. February 6, 1913

Farmer Brown Sets a Trap.

Peter Rabbit was in trouble. He had got into mischief and now, like everyone who gets into mischief, he wished that he hadn't. The worst of it was that he was a long way from his home in the dear old briar patch, and he didn't know how he ever could get back there again. Where was he? Why, in the stone wall on one side of Farmer Brown's young peach orchard. How Peter blessed the old stone wall in which he had found a safe hiding place! Bowser had hung around nearly all night, so that Peter had not dared to try to go home. Now it was daylight, and Peter knew it would not be safe to put his nose outside of the old stone wall.

Peter was worried, so worried that he couldn't go to sleep as he usually does in the daytime. So he sat hidden in the old wall and waited and watched. By and by he saw Farmer Brown and Farmer Brown's boy came out into the orchard. Right away they saw the mischief which Peter had done, and he could tell by the sound of their voices that they were very, very angry. They went away, but before long they were back again, and all day long Peter watched them work putting something around each of the young peach trees. Peter grew so curious that he forgot all about his troubles and how far away from home he was. He could hardly wait for night to come so that he might see what they had been doing.

Just as jolly, round, red Mr. Sun started to go to bed behind the Purple Hills, Farmer Brown and his boy started back to the house. Farmer Brown was smiling now.

"I guess that will fix him!" he said.

"Now what does he mean by that?" thought Peter. "Whom will it fix? Can it be me? I don't need any fixing."

He waited just as long as he could. When all was still, and the moonlight had begun to make shadows of the trees on the snow, Peter very cautiously crept out of his hiding place. Bowser the Hound was nowhere in sight, and everything was as quiet and peaceful as it had been when he first came into the orchard the night before. Peter had fully made up his mind to go straight home as fast as his long legs would take him, but

his dreadful curiosity insisted that first he must find out what Farmer Brown and his boy had been doing to the young peach trees.

So Peter hurried over to the nearest tree. All around the trunk of the tree, from the ground clear up higher than Peter could reach, was wrapped wire netting. Peter couldn't get so much as a nibble of the delicious bark. He hadn't intended to take any, for he had meant to go right straight home, but now that he couldn't get any, he wanted some more than ever—just a bite. Peter looked around. Everything was quiet. He would try the next tree, and then he would go home.

But the next tree was wrapped with wire. Peter hesitated, looked around, turned to go home, thought of how good that bark had tasted the night before, hesitated again, and then hurried over to the third tree. It was protected just like the others. Then Peter forgot all about going home. He wanted some of that delicious bark, and he ran from one tree to another as fast as he could go.

At last, way down at the end of the orchard, Peter found a tree that had no wire around it. "They must have forgotten this one!" he thought, and his eyes sparkled. All around on the snow were a lot of shiny little wires, but Peter didn't notice them. All he saw was that delicious bark on the young peach tree. He hopped right into the middle of the wires, and then, just as he reached up to take the first bite of bark, he felt something tugging at one of his hind legs.

(The Adventures of Danny Meadow Mouse, Chapter 14)

STORY 308. February 7, 1913

Caught in a Snare.

As Peter Rabbit reached up to nibble the bark of one of Farmer Brown's young peach trees he felt something tugging at one of his hind legs. It startled him so that he jumped to get away. Instead of doing this, he fell flat on his face. The thing on his hind leg had tightened and held him fast. A great fear came to Peter Rabbit, and lying there in the snow, he kicked and struggled with all his might. But the more he kicked, the tighter grew that hateful thing on his leg. Finally he grew too tired to kick anymore and lay still. The dreadful thing that held him hurt his leg, but it didn't pull when he lay still.

When he had grown a little calmer, Peter sat up to examine the thing which held him so fast. It was something like one of the blackberry vines he had sometimes tripped over, only it was bright and shiny, and had no branches of tiny prickles, and one end was fastened to a stake. Peter tried to bite off the shiny thing, but even his great, sharp front teeth couldn't cut it. Then Peter knew what it was. It was wire! It was a snare which Farmer Brown had set to catch him, and which he had walked right into because he had been so greedy for the bark of the young peach tree that he had not used his eyes to look out for danger.

Oh, how Peter Rabbit did wish that he had not been so curious to know what Farmer Brown had been doing that day, and that he had gone straight home as he had

meant to do, instead of trying to get one more meal of young peach bark! Big tears rolled down Peter's cheeks. What should he do? What could he do? For a long time, Peter sat in the moonlight, trying to think of something to do. At last he thought of the stake to which that hateful wire was fastened. The stake was of wood, and Peter's teeth would cut wood. Peter's heart gave a great leap of hope, and he began at once to dig away the snow from around the stake, and then settled himself to gnaw the stake in two.

Peter had been hard at work on the stake a long time and had it a little more than half cut through, when he heard a loud sniff down at the other end of the orchard. He looked up to see—whom do you think? Why, Bowser the Hound! He hadn't seen Peter yet, but he had already found Peter's tracks, and it would be but a few minutes before he found Peter himself.

Poor Peter Rabbit! There wasn't time to finish cutting off the stake. What could he do? He made a frightened jump just as he had when he first felt the wire tugging at his leg. Just as before, he was thrown flat on his face. He scrambled to his feet and jumped again, only to be thrown just as before. Just then Bowser the Hound saw him and opening his mouth sent forth a great roar. Peter made one more frantic jump. Snap! The stake had broken! Peter pitched forward on his head, turned a somersault, and scrambled to his feet. He was free at last! That is, he could run, but after him dragged a piece of the stake.

How Peter did run! It was hard work, for you know he had to drag that piece of stake after him. But he did it, and just in time he crawled into the old stone wall on one side of the orchard, while Bowser the Hound barked his disappointment to the moon.

(The Adventures of Danny Meadow Mouse, Chapter 15, "Peter Rabbit is Caught in a Snare")

STORY 309. February 8, 1913

Peter Rabbit's Hard Journey.

Peter Rabbit sat in the old stone wall along one side of Farmer Brown's orchard, waiting for Mrs. Moon to put out her light and leave the world in darkness until jolly, round, red Mr. Sun should kick off his rosy bed-clothes and begin his daily climb up in the blue, blue sky. In the winter, Mr. Sun is a late sleeper, and Peter knew that there would be two or three hours after Mrs. Moon put out her light when it would be quite dark. And Peter also knew, too, that by this time Hooty the Owl would probably have caught his dinner. So would old Granny Fox and Reddy Fox. Bowser the Hound would be too sleepy to be on the watch. It would be the very safest time for Peter to try to get to his home in the dear old briar patch.

So Peter waited and waited. Twice Bowser the Hound, who had chased him into the old wall, came over and barked at him and tried to get at him. But the old wall kept Peter safe, and Bowser gave it up. And all the time Peter sat waiting he was in great pain. You see, Peter had been caught in a snare set by Farmer Brown, and around one

of Peter's long hind legs was a shiny wire drawn so tight that it cut into his flesh and hurt dreadfully, and to the other end of the wire was fastened a piece of wood, part of the stake to which the snare had been made fast, and which Peter had managed to gnaw and break off.

It was on account of this that Peter was waiting for Mrs. Moon to put out her light. He knew that with that stake dragging after him he would have to go very slowly, and he could not run any more risk of danger than he actually had to. So he waited and waited, and by and by, sure enough, Mrs. Moon put out her light. Peter waited a little longer, listening with all his might. Everything was still. Then Peter crept out of the old stone wall.

Right away trouble began. The stake dragging at the end of the wire fast to his leg caught among the stones and pulled Peter up short. My, how it did hurt! It made the tears come. But Peter shut his teeth hard, and turning back, he worked until he got the stake free. Then he started on once more, dragging the stake after him.

Very slowly across the orchard and under the fence on the other side crept Peter Rabbit, his leg so stiff and sore that he could hardly touch it to the snow, and all the time dragging that piece of stake. It seemed to grow heavier and harder to drag every minute. Peter did not dare to go out across the open fields, for fear some danger might happen along, and he would have no place to hide. So he crept along close to the fences where bushes grow, and this made it very, very hard, for the dragging stake was forever catching in the bushes with a yank at the sore leg which brought Peter up short with a squeal of pain.

This was bad enough, but all the time Peter was filled with a dreadful fear that Hooty the Owl or Granny Fox might just happen along. He had to stop to rest very, very often, and then he would listen and listen. Over and over again he said to himself:

"Oh dear, whatever did I go up to the young peach orchard for when I knew I had no business there? Why couldn't I have been content with all the good things that were mine in the Green Forest and on the meadows? Oh dear! Oh dear!"

Just as jolly, round, red Mr. Sun began to light up the meadows, Peter Rabbit reached the dear old briar patch. Danny Meadow Mouse was sitting on the edge of it anxiously watching for him. Peter crawled up and started to creep in along one of his little private paths. He got in himself, but the dragging stake caught among the brambles, and Peter just fell down in the snow right where he was, too tired and worn out to move.

(The Adventures of Danny Meadow Mouse, Chapter 16)

STORY 310. February 10, 1913

Danny Meadow Mouse Becomes Worried

Danny Meadow Mouse limped around through the dear old briar patch, where he had lived with Peter Rabbit ever since he had squirmed out of the claws of Hooty the

Illustrations. February 3 to February 8, 1913.



304. Peter Rabbit Gets a Fright



305. Old Brier Patch Has a New Tenant



306. Peter Rabbit Visits the Peach Orchard



307. Farmer Brown Sets a Trap



308. Caught in a Snare



309. Peter Rabbit's Hard Journey

Owl and dropped there, right at the feet of Peter Rabbit. Danny limped because he was still lame and sore from Hooty's terrible claws, but he didn't let himself think much about that, because he was so thankful to be alive at all. So he limped around in the old briar patch, picking up seed which had fallen on the snow, and sometimes pulling down a few of the red berries which cling all winter to the wild rose bushes. The seeds in these were very nice indeed, and Danny always felt especially good after a meal of them.

Danny Meadow Mouse had grown very fond of Peter Rabbit, for Peter had been very, very good to him. Danny felt that he never, never could repay all of Peter's kindness. It had been very good of Peter to offer to share the old briar patch with Danny because Danny was so far from his own home that it would not be safe for him to try to get back there. But Peter had done more than that. He had taken care of Danny, such good care, during the first few days after Danny's escape from Hooty the Owl. He had brought good things to eat while Danny was too weak and sore to get things for himself. Oh, Peter had been very good indeed to him.

But now, as Danny limped around, he was not happy. No, sir, he was not happy. The truth is, Danny Meadow Mouse was worried. It was a different kind of worry from any he had known before. You see, for the first time in his life, Danny was worrying about someone else. He was worrying about Peter Rabbit. Peter had been gone from the old briar patch a whole night and a whole day. He often was gone all night, but never all day too. Danny was sure that something had happened to Peter. He thought of how he had begged Peter not to go up to Farmer Brown's young peach orchard. He had felt in his bones that it was not safe, that something dreadful would happen to Peter. How Peter had laughed at him and bravely started off! Why hadn't he come home?

As he limped around, Danny talked to himself:

"Why cannot people be content
With all the good things that are sent,
And mind their own affairs at home
Instead of going forth to roam?"

It was now the second night since Peter Rabbit had gone away. Danny Meadow Mouse couldn't sleep at all. Round and round through the old briar patch he limped, and finally sat down at the edge of it to wait and watch. At last, just as jolly, round, red Mr. Sun sent his first long rays of light across the Green Meadows, Danny saw something crawling toward the old briar patch. He rubbed his eyes and looked again. It was—no, it couldn't be—yes, it was Peter Rabbit! But what was the matter with him? Always before Peter had come home lipperty-lipperty-lipperty-lip, but now he was crawling, actually crawling! Danny Meadow Mouse didn't know what to make of it.

Nearer and nearer came Peter. Something was following him. No, Peter was dragging something after him. At last Peter started to crawl along one of his little private paths into the old briar patch. The thing dragging behind caught in the brambles, and Peter fell headlong in the snow, too tired and worn out to move. Then Danny saw what the trouble was. A wire was fast to one of Peter's long hind legs, and to the other end of the wire was fastened part of a stake. Peter had been caught in a

snare! Danny hurried over to Peter and tears stood in his eyes.

“Poor Peter Rabbit! Oh, I’m so sorry, Peter!” he whispered.

(The Adventures of Danny Meadow Mouse, Chapter 17)

STORY 311. February 11, 1913

Danny Meadow Mouse Returns a Kindness.

Peter Rabbit lay in one of his private little paths in the dear old briar patch. He was only a little way from the edge for he could get no further. You see, there was a wire fast to one of Peter’s long hind legs and part of a stake fast to the other end of the wire. Peter had dragged that piece of stake a long way, a very long way, indeed. But now he could drag it no farther, for it had caught in the bramble bushes and wouldn’t come along his private little path or let Peter go.

So Peter just dropped on the snow and cried. Yes, sir, he cried! You see, he was so tired and worn out and frightened, and his leg was so stiff and sore and hurt him so! And then it was so dreadful to actually get home and be stopped right on your very own doorstep. So Peter just laid there and cried. Just supposing old Granny Fox should come poking around and find Peter caught that way! All she would have to do would be to get hold of that hateful stake caught in the bramble bushes and pull Peter out where she could get him. Do you wonder that Peter cried?

By and by he became aware that someone was wiping away his tears. It was Danny Meadow Mouse. And Danny was singing in a funny little voice. Pretty soon Peter stopped crying and listened, and this is what he heard:

“Isn’t any use to cry!
Not a bit! Not a bit!
Wipe your eyes and wipe ‘em dry!
Use your wit! Use your wit!
Just remember that tomorrow
Never brings a single sorrow.
Yesterday has gone forever
And tomorrow gets here never.
Chase your worries all away;
Nothing’s worse than just today.”

Peter smiled in spite of himself.

“That’s right! That’s right! Smile away, Peter Rabbit. Smile away! Your troubles, sir, are all today. And between you and me, I don’t believe they are so bad as you think they are. Now you lie still just where you are, while I go see what can be done.”

With that, off whisked Danny Meadow Mouse as spry as you please, in spite of his lame leg, and in a few minutes, Peter knew by little twitches of the wire on his leg that Danny was doing something at the other end. He was. Danny Meadow Mouse had set out to gnaw that piece of stake until it was all in splinters. So there he sat and gnawed

and gnawed and gnawed. Jolly, round, red Mr. Sun climbed higher and higher in the sky, and Danny Meadow Mouse grew hungry, but still he kept right on gnawing at that bothersome stake.

By and by, happening to look across the snow-covered Green Meadows, he saw something that made his heart jump. It was Farmer Brown's boy coming straight over toward the dear old briar patch. Danny didn't say a word to Peter Rabbit, but gnawed faster than ever.

Farmer Brown's boy was almost there when Danny stopped gnawing. There was only a tiny bit of the stake left now, and Danny hurried to tell Peter Rabbit that there was nothing to stop him now from going to his most secret retreat in the very heart of the old briar patch. While Peter slowly dragged his way along, Danny trotted behind to see that the wire did not catch on the bushes. They had safely reached Peter Rabbit's secretest retreat when Farmer Brown's boy came up to the edge of the dear old briar patch.

"So this is where that rabbit that killed our peach tree lives!" said he. "We'll try a few snares and put you out of mischief, Mr. Rabbit."

And for the rest of the afternoon Farmer Brown's boy was very busy around the edge of the old briar patch.

(The Adventures of Danny Meadow Mouse, Chapter 18)

STORY 312. February 12, 1913

Peter Rabbit and Danny Meadow Mouse Live High.

Peter Rabbit sat in his secretest place in the dear old briar patch with one of his long hind legs was all swelled up and terribly sore because a fine wire was fast around it and cut into it. He could hear Farmer Brown's boy going around on the edge of the dear old briar patch and stopping every little while to do something. In spite of his pain, Peter was curious. Finally he called Danny Meadow Mouse, who, you know, was living with Peter in the dear old briar patch.

"Danny, you are small and can keep out of sight easier than I can. Go as near as ever you dare to Farmer Brown's boy and find out what he is doing," said Peter Rabbit.

So Danny Meadow Mouse crept out as near to Farmer Brown's boy as ever he dared, and studied and studied to make out what Farmer Brown's boy was doing. By and by he returned to Peter Rabbit.

"I don't know what he's doing, Peter, but he's putting something in every one of your private little paths leading into the briar patch from the Green Meadows."

"Ha!" said Peter Rabbit.

"There are little loops of that queer stuff you've got hanging to your leg, Peter," continued Danny Meadow Mouse.

"Just so!" said Peter Rabbit.

“And he’s put cabbage leaves and pieces of apple all around,” said Danny.

“We must be careful!” said Peter Rabbit.

Peter’s leg was in a very bad way, indeed, and Peter suffered a great deal of pain. The worst of it was, he didn’t know how to get off the wire that was cutting into it so. He had tried to cut the wire with his big teeth, but he couldn’t do it. Danny Meadow Mouse had tried and tried to gnaw the wire, but it wasn’t the least bit of use. But Danny wasn’t easily discouraged, and he kept working and working at it. Once he thought he felt it slip a little. He said nothing, but kept right on working. Pretty soon he was sure that it slipped. He went right on working harder than ever. By and by he had it so loose that he slipped it right off Peter’s leg, and Peter didn’t know anything about it. You see, that cruel wire snare had been so tight that Peter didn’t have any feeling except of pain left in his leg, and so when Danny Meadow Mouse pulled the cruel wire snare off, Peter didn’t know it until Danny held it up in front of him.

My, how thankful Peter was, and how he did thank Danny Meadow Mouse! But Danny said that it was nothing at all, just nothing at all, and that he owed more than that to Peter Rabbit for being so good to him and letting him live in the dear old briar patch.

It was a long time before Peter could hop as he used to, but after the first day he managed to get around in the dear old briar patch. He found that Farmer Brown’s boy had spread those miserable wire snares in every one of his private little paths. But Peter knew what they were now. He showed Danny Meadow Mouse how he, because he was so small, could safely run about among the snares and steal all the cabbage leaves and apples which Farmer Brown’s boy had put there for bait.

Danny Meadow Mouse thought this great fun and a great joke on Farmer Brown’s boy. So every day he stole the bait, and he and Peter Rabbit lived high while Peter’s leg was getting well. And all the time Farmer Brown’s boy wondered and wondered why he couldn’t catch Peter Rabbit.

(The Adventures of Danny Meadow Mouse, Chapter 19)

STORY 313. February 13, 1913

Peter Rabbit and Danny Meadow Mouse Entertain.

Peter Rabbit and Danny Meadow Mouse lived very happily in the dear old briar patch. To be sure Peter grew very impatient because he could not go roaming over the meadows and through the Green Forest every night. You remember he had been caught in a snare, and now one of his long hind legs was too stiff to permit running around. So while it grew better, Peter had to be content to stay in the old briar patch with Danny Meadow Mouse.

They had plenty of visitors. Yes, indeed, they had plenty of visitors. They entertained a great deal. But the visitors always stayed on the outside of the dear old briar patch. Every morning Farmer Brown’s boy came to see if Peter Rabbit had got

in to one of the snares which he, Farmer Brown's boy, had set in every one of Peter's private little paths leading into the old briar patch. Peter and Danny Meadow Mouse used to nudge each other and laugh when they saw him coming, for he always left good things to eat scattered around his snares and Danny had learned just how to steal these good things without getting in the snares.

But Peter and Danny always kept out of sight in the very middle of the old briar patch when Farmer Brown's boy was around, for sometimes he brought his dreadful gun.

Every evening old Granny Fox and Reddy Fox would prowl around the edge of the old briar patch and sniff at every one of Peter's private little paths. They would smell Danny Meadow Mouse where he had been stealing the bait and that would make their mouths water. Then they would smell Farmer Brown's boy and that would make the hair on their backs rise up with anger and fear mixed together. But they came every evening just hoping that some time Peter Rabbit or Danny Meadow Mouse would grow heedless and would be caught outside the dear, safe, old briar patch.

Peter and Danny used to enjoy those visits. It was such fun to sit safe and snug just out of reach in the old briar patch and tease old Granny Fox and Reddy Fox. I am afraid that sometimes Peter and Danny even made horrid faces at them just to make Reddy Fox lose his temper. Granny Fox was too wise to do anything so foolish as that, but Reddy would get so angry that he would forget all about the brambles and he would plunge in after Peter Rabbit and Danny Meadow Mouse, only to back out again yelping, because the sly old brambles had thrust their stout hooks into him and scratched him. Then how Peter and Danny would laugh. Sometimes Danny Meadow Mouse would sit up just out of reach and shout in his very small voice:

We're safe and sound, dear Mrs. Fox, and Master Reddy, too!
We snap our fingers in your face and don't care for you!
Come in and see us any time; the door is open wide.
Don't stay without, good Granny Fox; just follow us inside!

But Granny Fox knew better than to try, and she wouldn't even reply to Danny. Right down in her heart she was just as angry as Reddy was, but she had learned not to show it.

Early one morning Peter Rabbit, sitting on the edge of the old briar patch, saw Farmer Brown's boy coming, and at his heels trotted Bowser the Hound. Looking out from the opposite edge of the old briar patch, Danny Meadow Mouse saw old Granny Fox and Reddy Fox coming. Peter and Danny hid in their secretest place and hugged each other for joy at the thought of what was going to happen.

STORY 314. February 14, 1913

An Exciting Meeting.

Old Granny Fox and Reddy Fox had been paying a visit every evening to the old briar patch with the hope that they might catch Peter Rabbit or Danny Meadow Mouse

outside. But their visits were of no use whatever. Peter and Danny always were safely inside the dear old briar patch and always on the watch for Granny and Reddy Fox.

"I tell you what is it, Reddy, we must surprise them. We must go over there when they don't expect us and are not looking for us," said Granny Fox, as she and Reddy stole back to the Green Forest one evening. "We'll go very early tomorrow morning."

So very early the next morning Granny Fox and Reddy Fox started out for the dear old briar patch. About the same time some others started for the dear old briar patch. They were Bowser the Hound and Farmer Brown's boy. Now they were going toward the old briar patch from one direction, while Granny and Reddy Fox were going toward the old briar patch from the opposite direction. Of course, the dear old briar patch lay right between them, and neither party saw the other.

But Peter Rabbit and Danny Meadow Mouse, peeping out from the old briar patch, had seen Farmer Brown's boy and Bowser the Hound coming from one direction and Granny and Reddy Fox coming from the other and they hugged themselves for joy as they thought of the things that were likely to happen right on the edge of the old briar patch pretty soon.

Farmer Brown's boy walked just as softly as he knew how right at the heels of Bowser the Hound, for they wanted to surprise Peter Rabbit. Reddy Fox trotted just as softly as he knew how right at the heels of old Granny Fox, for they wanted to surprise Peter Rabbit. And safe in the dear old briar patch Peter Rabbit nudged Danny Meadow Mouse and clapped both hands over his mouth to keep from laughing aloud as he watched.

Along one edge of the old briar path stole old Granny Fox and Reddy Fox, their minds full of Peter Rabbit. Along the opposite side of the old briar patch stole Farmer Brown's boy and Bowser the Hound, their minds full of Peter Rabbit. All at the same time they turned the end of the old briar patch and came face to face.

Farmer Brown's boy and Bowser the Hound stared at Granny Fox and Reddy Fox, and Granny Fox and Reddy Fox stared at Farmer Brown's boy and Bowser the Hound. For a whole minute no one moved, everybody was so surprised. Then Granny Fox came to her senses and turned like a flash. Of course, Reddy was right in her way, and of course she knocked him over and fell sprawling herself. Of course Reddy yelled with fright, and of course both Foxes scrambled to their feet in twinkling and were running so fast that they looked just like little red streaks against the white snow, nothing more.

Bowser the Hound opened his mouth and with a great roar started after them. But Farmer Brown's boy was so surprised that he just stood and stared foolishly. He quite forgot that he had a gun until it was too late to shoot. And deep in the secretest place in the dear old briar patch Peter Rabbit and Danny Meadow Mouse rolled over and over in the snow and laughed and laughed until their sides ached as they thought of how funny everybody had looked, and how frightened Reddy Fox had been when Granny ran into him.

Bowser the Hound Gets a Cold Bath.

Old Granny Fox was feeling out of sorts. In the first place she was hungry and it always made her feel out of sorts to be hungry. In the second place she was tired and did not feel at all like a long, hard run. So as she and Reddy Fox ran across the snow-covered green meadows with the great voice of Bowser the Hound roaring behind them, Granny Fox made up her mind that she would fool Bowser the Hound without wasting any more time than she had to.

She sent Reddy Fox over to the Green Forest to hide and wait until she should come for him. Then she waited until Bowser the Hound was almost up to her, so that he would follow her instead of following the tracks of Reddy. Nearer and nearer came Bowser. He saw her now and his great voice rolled back across the meadows to the dear old briar patch, where Farmer Brown's boy stood with his gun. Farmer Brown's boy smiled.

"Good old Bowser!" he said. "That fox will have to be smarter than I think she is to fool him."

You see, Farmer Brown's boy didn't know old Granny Fox or he wouldn't have been so sure. Bowser the Hound was smart, very smart indeed, but old Granny Fox is one of the smartest of all the little people who live on the Green Meadows or in the Green Forest, and this very minute she was thinking of a plan to fool Bowser the Hound.

"Let me see," said Granny, talking to herself as she ran. "Let me see! That dog is getting very much excited and the nearer he gets to me the more excited he will get. Now excitement is very bad for anyone. People who are very much excited seldom do any thinking. That often leads them into trouble. I must plan some trouble for that noisy dog."

So Granny Fox ran across the snow-covered Green Meadows and right at her heels ran Bowser the Hound. Pretty soon they came in sight of the Smiling Pool, which was all bound with ice and covered with snow, all excepting one end where the Laughing Brook came in.

There was a little bit which had not frozen over. It looked cold and black. Old Granny Fox grinned when she saw it. She knew that around the edge of that open water the ice was thin, and right away an idea for getting rid of Bowser the Hound came into her head, so that she almost chuckled aloud.

"Bowser is three times as heavy as I am," she thought. "I will run across where the ice is thin, but strong enough to hold me. Bowser is so excited that he will not stop to think, and he is so much heavier than I am that he will break through. Perhaps a cold bath will calm his excitement. Any way, we will soon see."

It all happened just as shrewd old Granny Fox had planned. She allowed Bowser the Hound to get almost on her very heels. Then she ran down the bank and across the

thin ice as close to the open water as she dared. She ran very fast, and she heard the ice crack under her. When she had safely reached the other side, she turned just in time to see what happened to Bowser the Hound.

Bowser came roaring down the bank too excited to look about him or think. He galloped out on the thin ice. Granny heard a great crack, there was a splash, a howl and there was Bowser the Hound swimming for shore as fast as he could go. Granny Fox sat on the snow and laughed until her sides ached to see Bowser crawl out shivering so that he didn't have to shake himself to get the water off. Then he started for home as fast as he could go so as not to freeze to death.

Granny Fox, still chuckling, trotted over to the Green Forest to join Reddy Fox.

"Tis bad to get excited so
You don't know where it is you go!"

said she.

(The Bedtime Story Calendar #9)

STORY 316. February 17, 1913

Unc' Billy Possum Grows Hungry.

Unc' Billy Possum spent the very coldest days of winter curled up in his warm, snug home in the big hollow tree in the Green Forest. Unc' Billy didn't like the cold weather. Sometimes he would stick his head out of his doorway and then, as he heard rough Brother North Wind whooping through the Green Forest, he would turn right around and go back to his bed for another nap. And all the time he would be saying:

Way down souf de sun am shinin';
Yas, sah, dat am so!
Fo' dat lan' mah heart am pinin';
Yas, sah, dat am so!
"De mocking bird he sings all day;
De alligators dey am at play,
De flowers dey am bloomin' fair,
And mah heart aches to be down there—
Yas, sah, dat am so!

Now Unc' Billy had prepared for the winter by getting just as fat as he knew how. He was so fat that he could hardly waddle when Jack Frost first came to the Green Forest. You see he knew that if he was very, very fat he wouldn't have to worry about getting anything to eat, not for a long time, anyway. So when the ice and snow came, and Unc' Billy decided that it was more comfortable indoors than outdoors, he was almost as fat as Johnny Chuck was when he went to sleep for the long winter.

Now, Johnny Chuck just slept and slept and slept, without waking once the whole winter long. But Unc' Billy Possum couldn't sleep like that. He had to stick his head out every little while to see how the world was getting along without him. When the

Illustrations. February 10 to February 15, 1913.



310. Danny Meadow Mouse Becomes Worried



311. Danny Meadow Mouse Returns a Kindness



312. Peter Rabbit and Danny Meadow Mouse Live High



313. Peter Rabbit and Danny Meadow Mouse Entertain



314. An Exciting Meeting



315. Bowser the Hound Gets a Cold Bath

sun was bright and the air was not too cold, Unc' Billy would sometimes climb down from his hollow tree and walk about a little on the snow to stretch his legs. But he didn't enjoy it much. It made his feet cold, and then he didn't like the tracks he made. He scowled at them, for he knew well enough that if Farmer Brown's boy should happen along, he would know right away who had made those tracks, and then he would hunt for Unc' Billy's home in the hollow tree. So Unc' Billy didn't go out very much, and very seldom indeed when the snow was soft.

It seemed to Unc' Billy Possum as if the winter never, never would go. He was beginning to grow thin now, and of course he was getting hungry. He began to think about it, and the more he thought about it, the hungrier he grew. One morning he stuck his head out of his doorway, and whom should he see trotting along below but Jimmy Skunk. Jimmy looked fat and comfortable and not at all as if he did not mind the cold weather.

"Good mo'ning, Jimmy Skunk," said Unc' Billy.

Jimmy Skunk looked up. "Hello, Unc' Billy!" he exclaimed. "I haven't seen you for a long time!"

"Whar yo' been, Jimmy Skunk?" asked Unc' Billy.

Jimmy winked one eye. "Getting my breakfast of nice fresh eggs," he replied.

Unc' Billy Possum's mouth began to water. "Did yo' leave any?" he anxiously inquired.

Jimmy Skunk allowed that he did, and Unc' Billy gave a long sigh, as he watched Jimmy Skunk amble off up the Lone Little Path. Unc' Billy couldn't sleep any more now. No, sir, he couldn't sleep a wink. All he could do was to think how hungry he was. He would shut his eyes, and then it seemed as if he could see right into Farmer Brown's hen house, and there were eggs, eggs, eggs, everywhere. Finally Unc' Billy made up his mind.

"Ah'm going up there the very first dark night!" said he.

(The Adventures of Unc' Billy Possum, Chapter 13)

STORY 317. February 18, 1913

Old Mrs. Possum Grows Worried.

Old Mrs. Possum counted her babies to be sure that they all were tucked snug and warm in their bed in the old hollow tree in the Green Forest. "One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight." They were all there. Mrs. Possum looked at them with a great deal of pride and sighed as she thought of how soon they would be leaving the old hollow tree to see the great world and make homes for themselves. Just as soon as the

beautiful spring came, they would one by one slip away. Mrs. Possum sighed again. She didn't like winter. No, sir, she didn't like winter one bit. But when she thought of how her babies would leave her, she almost wished that spring never would come.

Sure that her babies were warm and comfortable, old Mrs. Possum went to the door and looked out. It was plain to be seen that Mrs. Possum was worried. That was the tenth time she had looked out in half an hour. Her sharp little old face looked sharper than ever. It always looks sharper when she is worried, just as the tongues of some people always grow sharper when they are worried.

"Ah doan see what can be keepin' mah ol' man! Ah'm plumb worried to death," muttered old Mrs. Possum.

Right that very minute she heard a noise outside that made her hurry to the door and thrust her head out once more. It was Sammy Jay, shrieking: "Thief! Thief! Thief!" at the top of his lungs.

"He's a thief himself and just a low-down mischief maker, for all his smart clo'es, but he knows a powerful lot about what is going on in the Green Forest, and perhaps he has seen mah ol' man," said old Mrs. Possum, as she tried to make her sharp face as pleasant as possible. She looked over at Sammy Jay, who was in the next tree, and smiled, and when she smiled she showed all her sharp teeth.

"Good mo'ning, Brer Jay," said she.

"Hello!" exclaimed Sammy Jay, not at all politely. "Where's Uncle Billy Possum?"

Old Mrs. Possum shook her head, and the worried look came back into her face, although she tried hard, O, so hard, not to let it.

"He done go out fo' a walk," replied old Mrs. Possum. "Ah reckons yo'all just got up, or yo' would have met up with him somewhere."

Old Mrs. Possum said this just to try to make Sammy Jay talk, for Sammy is very quick-tempered, and quick-tempered people often say a lot more than they mean to. You see, Mrs. Possum was quite sure that if Sammy Jay knew how worried she was over Unc' Billy Possum, he would refuse to tell her whether or not he had seen Unc' Billy, for Sammy Jay is mean and loves to torment others.

Sammy's temper flared up right away. "I've been up ever since sunup!" he sputtered. "Your old man isn't anywhere in the Green Forest, unless he's gone to sleep in some other hollow tree, and I wouldn't blame him a bit if he had!"

Keep your temper, Sammy Jay!
Keep your temper, do, I pray!

said old Mrs. Possum, grinning in the most aggravating way as she turned back to her babies. She had found out what she wanted to know—Sammy Jay had seen nothing of Unc' Billy Possum. Old Mrs. Possum sat down with her head in her hands. She was more worried than ever.

(The Adventures of Unc' Billy Possum, Chapter 14)

STORY 318. February 19, 1913

The Foolishness of Unc' Billy Possum.

If Unc' Billy Possum hadn't happened to look out of his doorway in the big hollow tree in the Green Forest, or if Jimmy Skunk hadn't happened to come along just that very minute, or if Unc' Billy hadn't asked Jimmy where he had been, or if Jimmy hadn't mentioned nice fresh eggs, Unc' Billy wouldn't have been foolish, and old Mrs. Possum wouldn't have been worried. But all those things did happen. They happened one day in the very last part of winter, when Unc' Billy Possum was getting uneasy because he had been penned up in his home in the hollow tree so long.

You see Unc' Billy came from way down South, and so he didn't like the snow and the ice and the cold winds. And because he didn't like them he spent most of the time curled up asleep in his home in the hollow tree in the Green Forest. He hadn't had much to eat all Winter, but he hadn't had much to eat all winter, but he hadn't minded that, because he slept so much that he wasn't awake long enough at a time to think about eating. And then he had been very, very fat when he shut himself up, so that he hadn't needed to eat. Sometimes he came out to stretch his legs and run around on the snow a little. But he didn't do this often, and then only on very mild days.

But now that Winter was most over Unc' Billy was getting uneasy, and he was getting hungry, as now he was very, very thin. So, after Jimmy Skunk had mentioned his fine breakfast of fresh eggs, Unc' Billy Possum couldn't think of anything else. He knew well enough where Jimmy had found those eggs. Yes, indeed, Unc' Billy knew all about it. He could shut his eyes and just see the inside of Farmer Brown's hen house with the rows of hens and roosters sitting on the roosts at one end, their heads tucked under their wings. He could see the rows of nests and the beautiful brown eggs in them. Jimmy Skunk couldn't climb, and so he could have gotten only the eggs in the lower nests. Now if he, Unc' Billy, had been there, he could have climbed to the very topmost nest and—but what was the use of thinking about it? He hadn't been there, and he couldn't go now, because it was daylight.

All the rest of the day Unc' Billy tried to sleep, but when he did sleep he dreamed about eggs, nice, fresh, delicious eggs, and when he was awake he thought about eggs. It made him more and more uneasy and fidgety. Old Mrs. Possum couldn't stand it.

"What all am the matter with yo'?" she snapped. "Ah do wish yo' would keep still a minute!"

Unc' Billy muttered something, but all that Mrs. Possum could hear was "eggs."

"Now don't yo' all get to thinking of such foolishness as eggs!" she commanded. "It isn't safe to be snooping around Farmer Brown's hen house when there's snow on the ground. Yo' just fo'get all about eggs! Do yo' hear what Ah say?"

Unc' Billy nodded that he did. But just the same he couldn't think of anything else. He knew that old Mrs. Possum was right, and that it wasn't safe to go fooling around Farmer Brown's hen house and leaving his tracks for everybody who came along to

see. Just the same, Unc' Billy felt that he had got to have a nice fresh egg. He had got to have it. That is all there was about it.

As soon as jolly, round, red Mr. Sun had gone to bed behind the Purple Hills that night, Unc' Billy crept out of his home in the hollow tree.

"Where are yo' going?" demanded Mrs. Possum.

"Just to stretch the kinks out of mah legs," replied Unc' Billy.

Old Mrs. Possum looked after him suspiciously. "Don't yo' go fo' to do any foolishness!" she called.

Unc' Billy didn't answer. He was on his way to Farmer Brown's hen house.

(The Adventures of Unc' Billy Possum, Chapter 15)

STORY 319. February 20, 1913

Why Unc' Billy Possum Didn't Go Home .

Unc' Billy Possum had a very good reason for not going home, a very good reason, indeed. Even old Mrs. Possum would have thought it was a good reason, could she have known it. But she didn't know it, and so she sat in the home in the big hollow tree in the Green Forest and worried herself almost sick, because Unc' Billy didn't come home, and she didn't know what might have happened to him.

Sometimes Unc' Billy wished that he was back in the old hollow tree, and sometimes he was glad that he was right where he was. Sometimes he felt little shivers of fear run all over him as he thought of what might become of him if he should be found. Sometimes a little tickly feeling of pleasure ran all over him, as he bit a hole in the end of a freshly laid egg and sucked the egg out of the shell.

Where was Unc' Billy? Of course you have guessed just where he was. He was in Farmer Brown's henhouse. Yes, sir, that is just where Unc' Billy Possum was—in Farmer Brown's henhouse. He had no business there. Of course not. He was there just because he was so hungry for fresh eggs that he thought about them all day and dreamed about them all night until just had to have some. So, although there was snow on the ground and he knew that it was very, very foolish to leave his footprints where Farmer Brown's boy would be likely to see them, Unc' Billy couldn't say no to his stomach, and here he was in Farmer Brown's henhouse.

But Unc' Billy was very, very crafty. He had found Jimmy Skunk's tracks boldly leading up to the henhouse, so Unc' Billy had stepped as carefully as he knew how in the footprints of Jimmy Skunk, in order that Farmer Brown's boy might think that Jimmy Skunk was the only visitor to the henhouse. But with all his craft, there was one thing that Unc' Billy forgot. Yes, sir, there was one thing Unc' Billy forgot all about. He forgot to keep his tail up. He was trying so hard to step in the footprints of Jimmy Skunk, that he forgot all about that little, smooth, handy old tail of his, and he let it drag along the snow.

When Unc' Billy was safely in the henhouse, he hurried from one nest to another. There were eggs, plenty of them. It seemed to him that nothing he had ever seen before had looked half so good as those eggs. He just ate and ate and ate until he couldn't eat another one. Now a full stomach is very apt to make a sleepy head. Unc' Billy knew that the thing for him to do was to hurry home as fast as he could go, but he didn't. No, sir, he didn't do it. The henhouse was warm and here were some of the nicest nests of hay! He was tired after his long walk from the Green Forest, for Unc' Billy had done so little walking this winter that he was rather out of practice. What would be the harm in taking a teeny, weeny nap before he started back home?

Unc' Billy climbed to the very last nest in the topmost row, way up in a dark corner. It hadn't been used for a long time, but it was full of nice, soft hay. Unc' Billy curled himself up in it, and with a great sigh of contentment, closed his eyes for that teeny, weeny nap. He didn't open them again until he heard an angry voice right close to him. He peeped out. It was broad daylight, and there, just below him, was Farmer Brown's boy, looking at the empty egg shells left by Unc' Billy. Farmer Brown's boy was angry. Yes, indeed, he was very, very angry. Unc' Billy shivered as he listened. Then he snuggled down out of sight under the hay of the nest.

(The Adventures of Unc' Billy Possum, Chapter 16)

STORY 320. February 21, 1913

Unc' Billy Possum Lies Low.

Unc' Billy Possum snuggled down under the hay in the unused nest in the darkest corner of Farmer Brown's henhouse and hardly dared to breathe. Right under him stood Farmer Brown's boy and Farmer Brown's boy was angry. Yes, sir, he was angry. There was no doubt about that. He had found the empty shells of the eggs which Unc' Billy had eaten in the night, and Unc' Billy knew by the sound of his voice that Farmer Brown's boy meant to find the thief.

It was a terrible position to be in, right there in the henhouse, with no chance to run. Unc' Billy wished with all his might that he had never thought of eggs, and that he was safe back home in the dear old hollow tree in the Green Forest. Oh, dear! oh, dear! why hadn't he gone right straight back there, after eating those eggs, instead of taking a nap? But he hadn't. He had taken a nap and overslept, and here he was, right in the henhouse, in broad daylight.

"It must have been a Skunk," said Farmer Brown's boy, "and if it was, he must have left some tracks in the snow outside. I'll just look around a bit."

Unc' Billy almost chuckled as he heard Farmer Brown's boy go out.

"He'll find Jimmy Skunk's tracks, but he won't find mine," thought Unc' Billy. "Isn't it lucky that I thought to step right in Jimmy Skunk's tracks when I came here?"

He lay still and listened to Farmer Brown's boy poking around outside. He heard him exclaim: "Ah, I thought so!" and knew that he had found the tracks Jimmy Skunk

had made in the snow. Unc' Billy almost chuckled again as he thought what a smart fellow he had been to step in Jimmy Skunk's tracks. And right then he heard something that put an end to all his fine thoughts about his own smartness, and sent little cold shivers up and down his backbone.

"Hello!" said the voice of Farmer Brown's boy. "These are queer tracks! That skunk must have had a queer tail, for here are the marks of it in the snow, and they look as if they might have been made by the tail of a very big rat."

Unc' Billy remembered then for the first time that when he had thought he was so smart, he had forgotten to hold his tail up. He had dragged it in the snow, and of course it had left a mark.

"I guess that there was more than one visitor here last night," continued the voice of Farmer Brown's boy. "Here are the tracks of the skunk going away from the henhouse, but I don't see any of those other queer tracks going away. Whoever made them must be right around here now."

Back into the henhouse came Farmer Brown's boy and began to poke around in all the corners. He moved all the boxes and looked in the grain bin. Then he began to look in the nests. Unc' Billy could hear him coming nearer and nearer. He was looking in the very next nest to the one in which Unc' Billy was hiding. Finally he looked into that very nest. Unc' Billy Possum held his breath.

Now the nest in which Unc' Billy was hiding was on the topmost row in the darkest corner of the henhouse, and Unc' Billy had crawled down underneath the hay. Perhaps it was because that corner was so dark, or perhaps it was because that nest was so high up, that Farmer Brown's boy really didn't expect to find anything there. Anyway, all he saw was the hay, and he didn't take the trouble to put his hand in and feel for anything under the hay.

"It's queer," said Farmer Brown's boy. "It's very queer! I guess I shall have to set some traps."

And all the time Unc' Billy Possum held his breath and lay low.

(The Adventures of Unc' Billy Possum, Chapter 17)

STORY 321. February 22, 1913

Unc' Billy Possum is a Prisoner.

Mah home is on a holler tree;
It's a long way home!
Ah wish Ah's there, but here Ah be;
It's a long way home!
If Ah had only been content
Instead of out on mischief bent,
Ah'd have no reason to repent.
It's a long way home!

Unc' Billy Possum kept saying this over and over again to himself as he lay curled up under the hay in the last nest in the darkest corner in Farmer Brown's henhouse. Unc' Billy didn't dare go to sleep, because he was afraid that Farmer Brown's boy might find him. And, anyway, he wanted to see just what Farmer Brown's boy was doing. So peeping out of the last nest of the top row in the darkest corner of Farmer Brown's henhouse, Unc' Billy Possum watched Farmer Brown's boy, who seemed to be very busy indeed. What do you think he was doing? Unc' Billy knew. Yes, sir, Unc' Billy knew just what Farmer Brown's boy was doing. He was setting traps.

Unc' Billy's eyes twinkled as he watched Farmer Brown's boy, for Unc' Billy knew that those traps were being set for him, and now that he knew just where each one was, of course he wasn't a bit afraid. It seemed to Unc' Billy that it was just the funniest kind of a joke to be watching Farmer Brown's boy set those traps, while all the time Farmer Brown's boy thought he was hiding them so cleverly that the only way they would be found would be by someone stepping into one and getting caught.

"There," said Farmer Brown's boy, as he set the last trap, "I'd like to see anything get into this henhouse now without getting caught!"

Unc' Billy almost chuckled aloud. Yes, sir, he almost chuckled aloud. It was such a funny idea that Farmer Brown's boy should have taken all the trouble to set those traps to catch Unc' Billy trying to get into the henhouse, when all the time he was already in there.

Unc' Billy laughed under his breath as Farmer Brown's boy closed the door of the henhouse and went off whistling. "Ho, ho, ho! Ha, ha, ha! Hee, hee—" Unc' Billy broke off short, right in the very middle of his laugh. He had just thought of something, and it wasn't funny at all. With all those traps set at every opening to the henhouse, no one could get in without getting caught, and of course no one who was in could get out without getting caught!

The joke wasn't on Farmer Brown's boy, after all; it was on Unc' Billy Possum. But Unc' Billy couldn't see that it was any joke at all. Unc' Billy was a prisoner, a prisoner in Farmer Brown's henhouse, and he didn't know how ever he was going to get out of there.

"It's a long way home," said Unc' Billy mournfully, as he peeped out of a crack toward the Green Forest.

(The Adventures of Unc' Billy Possum, Chapter 18)

STORY 322. February 24, 1913

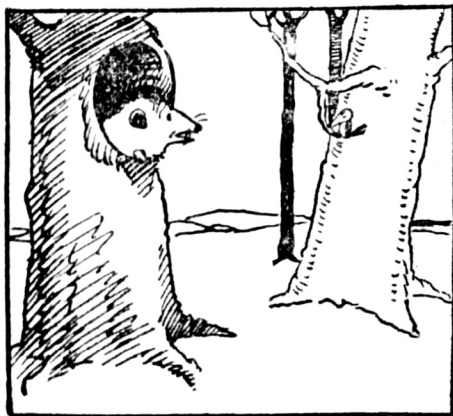
What the Snow Did.

Up in the last nest of the top row in the darkest corner of Farmer Brown's henhouse Unc' Billy Possum did a lot of thinking. He was a prisoner, just as much a prisoner as if he were in a cage.

Illustrations. February 17 to February 22, 1913.



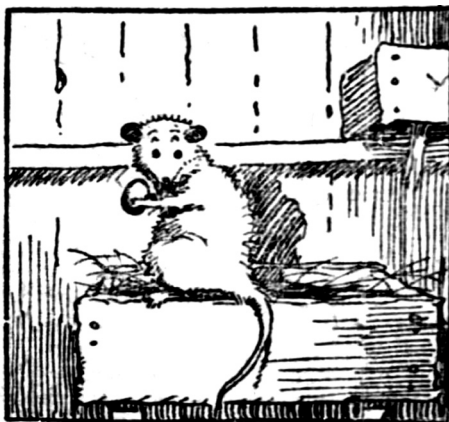
316. Unc' Billy Possum Grows Hungry



317. Old Mrs. Possum Grows Worried



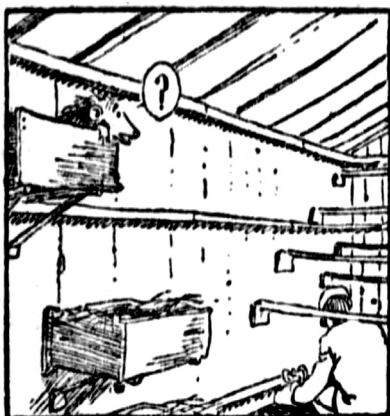
318. The Foolishness of Unc' Billy Possum



319. Why Unc' Billy Possum Didn't Go Home



320. Unc' Billy Possum Lies Low



321. Unc' Billy Possum is a Prisoner

You see Farmer Brown's boy knew that someone was stealing the eggs in the henhouse, and so he had set a trap at every hole into the henhouse so that whoever tried to get in would surely get caught. But Unc' Billy was already in there when the traps were set. He know all about them, just where each one was, and he knew that if no one could get in neither could anyone get out.

Now Unc' Billy Possum wouldn't have minded being a prisoner in the henhouse but for two things; he was dreadfully afraid that his old friend and partner⁸, Jimmy Skunk, would get hungry for eggs and would get caught in the traps, and he was still more afraid that Farmer Brown's boy would think to put his hand down under the hay in the last nest of the top row in the darkest corner. So Unc' Billy spent most of his time studying and thinking of some way to get out, and if he couldn't do that, of some way to warn Jimmy Skunk to keep away from Farmer Brown's hen-house.

If it hadn't been for those two worries, Unc' Billy would have been willing to stay there the rest of the winter. It was delightfully warm and cozy in the last nest of the top row in the darkest corner. He knew which nest Mrs. Speckles always used and which one Mrs. Feathertoes liked best, and he knew that of all the eggs laid in Farmer Brown's hen-house those laid by Mrs. Speckles and Mrs. Feathertoes were the best. Having all the eggs he could eat, Unc' Billy had grown very particular. Nothing but the best, the very best, would do for him.

So he would lie curled up in the last nest of the top row in the darkest corner and wait until he heard the high-pitched voice of Mrs. Speckles proudly crying:

"Cut, cut, cut, cut, cut, cutaacut! I lay the finest eggs in the world!"

Then Unc' Billy would chuckle to himself and wait a few minutes longer for the voice of Mrs. Feathertoes, saying:

"Cut, cut, cut cut, cutaacut! Cut, cut, cut! No one lays such splendid eggs as I do!"

Then, while Mrs. Speckles and Mrs. Feathertoes were disputing as to which laid the best eggs, Unc' Billy would slip out and breakfast on both those very eggs.

So for almost a week Unc' Billy lived in Farmer Brown's hen-house and ate the eggs of Mrs. Speckles and Mrs. Feathertoes and hid in the last nest of the top row in the darkest corner and shivered as he heard Farmer Brown's boy tell what would happen if he caught the one who was stealing those eggs. Sometimes the door was left open during the day, and Unc' Billy would peep out and wish that he dared to run. But he didn't, for Bowser the Hound was always prowling around, and then again he was almost sure to be seen by some one.

At last one day it began to snow. It snowed all day and it snowed all night. Rough Brother North Wind piled it up in great drifts in front of the henhouse door and all along one side of the henhouse. It covered the traps so deep that they couldn't possibly catch any one. As soon as the snow stopped falling, Unc' Billy began to dig his way up to the top from the very hole by which he had entered the henhouse. He didn't like it, for he doesn't like snow, but now was his chance to get away, and he meant to make the

most of it.

(The Adventures of Unc' Billy Possum, Chapter 19)

STORY 323. February 25, 1913

Unc' Billy Possum Wishes He Had Snowshoes.

Unc' Billy Possum didn't know whether he liked the snow more than he hated it or hated it more than he liked it just now. Usually, he dislikes the snow very much, and doesn't go out in it any more than he has to. But this time the snow had done Unc' Billy a good turn, a very good turn, indeed. At least Unc' Billy thought it had. Unc' Billy had been a prisoner in Farmer Brown's henhouse. He couldn't get out, because Farmer Brown's boy had set traps outside every opening. Then the snow had come and buried them so deep that they could not catch anyone, and Unc' Billy had dug his way out.

Once out of the henhouse, Unc' Billy lost no time in starting for the Green Forest. But it was slow, hard work. You see, the snow was newly fallen and very soft. Of course Unc' Billy sank into it almost up to his middle at every step. He huffed and he puffed and he grunted and groaned. You see Unc' Billy had slept so much through the winter that he was not at all used to hard work of any kind, and he wasn't half way to the Green Forest before he was so tired it seemed to him that he could hardly move, and so out of breath that he could only gasp. It was then that he was sure that he hated the snow more than he liked it, even if it had set him free from the henhouse of Farmer Brown.

Now it never does to let one's wits go to sleep. Some folks call it forgetting, but forgetting is nothing but sleepy wits. And sleepy wits get more people into trouble than anything else in the world. Unc' Billy Possum's wits were asleep when he left Farmer Brown's henhouse. If they hadn't been, he would have remembered this little saying:

The wits that live within my head
Must never, never go to sleep,
For if they should I might forget
And trouble on me swiftly leap.

But Unc' Billy's wits certainly were asleep. He was so tickled over the idea that he could get out of the hen-house, that he couldn't think of anything else, and so he forgot. Yes, sir, Unc' Billy forgot! What did he forget? Why, he forgot that that nice, soft snow, which so kindly buried the dreadful traps so that they could do no harm, couldn't be waded through without leaving tracks. Unc' Billy forgot all about that, until he was half way to the Green Forest, and then, as he sat down to rest and get his breath, he remembered.

Unc' Billy looked behind him, and he turned pale. Yes, sir, Unc' Billy Possum turned pale! There, all the way from Farmer Brown's henhouse, was a broad trail in the smooth white snow, where he had plowed his way through. If Farmer Brown's boy should come out to look at his traps, he would see that track at once, and all he would have to do would be to follow it until it led him to Unc' Billy.

“Oh, dear! Oh, dear! Whatever did Ah leave the henhouse for?” wailed Unc’ Billy.

His wits were all wide awake now. It wouldn’t do to go back. Farmer Brown’s boy would see that he had gone back, and then he would hunt that henhouse through until he found Unc’ Billy. No, there was nothing to do but to go on and trust that Farmer Brown’s boy was so snowed in and would be kept so busy shovelling out paths, that he would forget all about looking at his traps. Unc’ Billy drew a long breath and began to wade ahead toward the Green Forest.

“If Ah only had snowshoes!” he panted. “If Ah only had snowshoes.”

(The Adventures of Unc’ Billy Possum, Chapter 20)

STORY 324. February 26, 1913

Farmer Brown’s Boy Chops Down a Tree.

There was an old possum lived up in a tree;
Hi, ho, see the chips fly!
The slyest old thief that you ever did see;
Hi, ho, see the chips fly!
He ate and he ate in the dark of the night,
And when the day came not an egg was in sight,
But now that I know where he’s making his bed,
I’ll do without eggs and will eat him instead!
Hi, ho, see the chips fly!

Farmer Brown’s boy sang as he swung his keen axe, and the chips did fly. They flew out on the white snow in all directions. And the louder Farmer Brown’s boy sang, the faster the chips flew. Farmer Brown’s boy had come to the Green Forest bright and early that morning, and he had made up his mind that he would take home a fat possum for dinner. He didn’t have the least doubt about it, and that is why he sang as he made the chips fly. He had tracked that possum right up to that tree, and there were no tracks going away from it. Right up near the top he could see a hollow, just such a hollow as a possum likes. All he had to do was to cut the tree down and split it open, and Mr. Possum would be his.

So Farmer Brown’s boy swung his axe, chop, chop, chop, and the chips flew out on the white snow, and Farmer Brown’s boy sang, never once thinking of how the possum he was after might feel. Of course it was Unc’ Billy Possum whose tracks he had followed. He had seen them outside of the hen-house, just as Unc’ Billy had been afraid that he would. He couldn’t very well have helped it, those tracks were so very plain to be seen. Unc’ Billy had thought about them when he was half way to the Green Forest. It was too late then. He ought to have thought of them before he had made them. Then he wouldn’t have made them at all, but would have kept hidden in the henhouse until there wasn’t any snow to show his tracks.

That had been a long, hard, anxious journey for Unc’ Billy from Farmer Brown’s henhouse to the Green Forest. The snow was so deep that he could hardly wade through

it. When he reached that hollow tree, he was so tired that it was all he could do to climb it. Of course it wasn't his own hollow tree, where old Mrs. Possum and the eight little Possums lived. He knew better than to go there, leaving a plain track for Farmer Brown's boy to follow. So he had been very thankful to climb up this hollow tree. And, just as he had feared, here was Farmer Brown's boy.

Chop, chop, chop! The snow was covered with chips now. Chop, chop, chop! The tree began to shiver and then to shake. Cra-a-ck! With a great crash over it went!

Bowser the Hound barked excitedly, and with Farmer Brown's boy rushed to the hollow near the top to catch Mr. Possum, if he should run out. But he didn't run out. Farmer Brown's boy rapped on the tree with the handle of his axe, but no one ran out.

"I guess he's playing dead," said Farmer Brown's boy, and began to split open the tree, so as to get into the hollow. And as he chopped, he began to sing again. Pretty soon he had split the tree wide open. In the bottom of the hollow was an old nest of Chatterer the Red Squirrel, and that was all. Farmer Brown's boy rubbed his eyes and stared and stared and stared. There were Unc' Billy's tracks leading straight up to that tree and none leading away. Did that Possum have wings?

(The Adventures of Unc' Billy Possum, Chapter 21)

STORY 325. February 27, 1913

Where Unc' Billy Possum Was.

Where was Unc' Billy Possum? That is what Farmer Brown's boy wanted to know. That is what Bowser the Hound wanted to know. Where was Unc' Billy Possum? Farmer Brown's boy had tracked him in the snow right up to a hollow tree in the Green Forest. Then with his sharp axe he had chopped and chopped and chopped until, with a crash, down came the hollow tree. Bowser the Hound had barked in great excitement and rushed to the doorway to the hollow just as soon as the tree fell. He was all ready to seize Unc' Billy Possum when he should run out. Farmer Brown's boy rushed up with his axe all ready to knock Unc' Billy on the head.

But Unc' Billy didn't run out. No, sir, Unc' Billy Possum didn't run out. Then Farmer Brown's boy swung his sharp axe and chopped and chopped and chopped until he had chopped the hollow tree wide open. Of course, he and Bowser were sure that they would find Unc' Billy then. But they didn't. No, sir, they didn't find Unc' Billy Possum. Why? Because he wasn't there. He wasn't there at all. He was in another hollow tree all the time and laughing till his sides ached as he peeped out and saw how hard Farmer Brown's boy worked to cut down the other hollow tree.

"Ah done fool him that time," said Unc' Billy, as he watched Farmer Brown's boy wading off home through the snow, with Bowser the Hound at his heels.

"You certainly did, Unc' Billy! How did you do it?" asked a voice right over Unc' Billy's head.

Unc' Billy looked up in surprise. There was Tommy Tit the Chickadee. Unc' Billy

grinned.

“Ah just naturally expected Ah was gwine to have visitors, and so Ah prepared a little surprise. Yes, sah, Ah done prepare a little surprise. Yo’ see, mah tracks in the snow was pow’ful plain. Yes, sah, they sho’ly was! When Ah had climbed up that tree and looked down and saw all those tracks what Ah done made, Ah begin to get powerful anxious. Yes, sah, Ah done get so anxious Ah just couldn’t get any rest in mah mind. Ah knew Farmer Brown’s boy was gwine to find those tracks, and when he did, he was gwine to follow ‘em right smart quick. Sho’ enough, just before sundown, here he comes. He followed mah tracks right up to the foot of the tree whar Ah was hiding in the hollow, and Ah heard him say:

“So this is whar yo’ live, is it, Mistah Possum? Ah reckon Bowser and Ah’ll make yo’ a call to-morrow.”

“When I heard him say that, Ah felt right bad. Yes, sah, Ah sho’ly did feel right smart bad. Ah studied and Ah studied how Ah was gwine to fool Farmer Brown’s boy and Bowser the Hound. If Ah climbed down and went somewhere else, Ah would have to leave tracks, and that boy done bound to find me just the same. Ah done wish Ah had wings like yo’ and Brer Buzzard.

“So yo’ po’ ol’ Unc’ Billy sat studying and studying and getting mo’ and mo’ troubled in mah mind. By and by Ah noticed that a branch from that holler tree rubbed against a branch of another tree, and a branch of that tree rubbed against a branch of another tree, and if Ah made a right smart jump from that Ah could get into this tree, which had a holler just made fo’ me. Ah didn’t waste no mo’ time studying. No, sah, Ah just moved right away, and here Ah am.”

“And you didn’t leave any tracks, and you didn’t have any wings,” said Tommy Tit the Chickadee.

“No,” said Unc’ Billy, “but Ah done find that yo’ can most always find a way out if yo’ look hard enough. Just now, Ah am looking right smart hard fo’ a way to get home, but Ah reckon mah eyesight am failing; Ah don’ see any yet.”

“Dee, dee, dee!” laughed Tommy Tit merrily. “Be patient, Unc’ Billy, and perhaps you will.”

(The Adventures of Unc’ Billy Possum, Chapter 22)

STORY 326. February 28, 1913

Happy Jack Squirrel Makes an Unexpected Call.

Happy Jack Squirrel likes the snow. He always has liked the snow. It makes him feel frisky. He likes to run and jump in it and dig little holes in it after nuts, which he hid under the leaves before the snow fell. When his feet get cold, all he has to do is to scamper up a tree and warm them in his own fur coat. So the big snowstorm which made so much trouble for Unc’ Billy Possum just suited Happy Jack Squirrel, and he

had a whole lot of fun making his funny little tracks all through that part of the Green Forest in which he lives.

Happy Jack didn't know anything about Unc' Billy Possum's troubles. He supposed that Unc' Billy was safe at home in his own big hollow tree, fast asleep, as he had been most of the winter. Happy Jack couldn't understand how anybody could want to sleep such fine weather, but that was their own business, and Happy Jack had learned a long time ago not to worry about other people's business. So he frisked about this way and frisked about that way in the snow, and raced up to the tops of the tallest trees and down again, just for fun and because he felt so good.

Sometimes he would stop to rest. Then he would sit up very straight and fold his hands across his breast, where they would get nice and warm in the fur of his coat. His beautiful, great gray tail would be arched up over his back. His bright eyes would snap and twinkle, and then he would shout just for joy, and every time he shouted he jerked his big tail. Farmer Brown's boy called it barking, but it was Happy Jack's way of shouting, and this is what he would say:.

"I love to romp! I love to play!
I'm happy, happy, all the day!
I love the snow, so soft and white!
I love the sun that shines so bright!
I love the whole world, for, you see,
The world is very good to me!"

By and by Happy Jack came to the hollow tree that Farmer Brown's boy had cut down because he thought that Unc' Billy Possum was inside of it.

"Hello!" exclaimed Happy Jack. "That's one of the old storehouses of my cousin, Chatterer the Red Squirrel! I've got an old storehouse near here, and I guess I'll see if I have left any nuts in it."

He scampered over to another hollow tree standing near. He scampered up the tree as only Happy Jack can and whisked in at the open doorway of the hollow. Now Happy Jack had been in that hollow tree so often that he didn't once think of looking to see where he was going, and he landed plump on something that was soft and warm. Happy Jack was so surprised that he didn't know what to do for a second. And then all in a flash that something soft and warm was full of sharp claws and sharper teeth, and an angry growling tilled the hollow tree.

Happy Jack was so frightened that he scrambled out as fast as he could. When he was safely outside, he grew very angry to think that any one should be in his storehouse, even if it was an old one. He could hear a very angry voice inside, and in a minute who should appear at the doorway but Unc' Billy Possum!

Unc' Billy had been waked out of a sound sleep, and that was enough to make any one cross. Besides, he had been badly frightened, and that made him crosser still.

"What do yo' mean by trying to frighten honest people?" snapped Unc' Billy, when he caught sight of Happy Jack.

“What do you mean by stealing into other folk’s houses?” demanded Happy Jack, just as angrily.

(The Adventures of Unc’ Billy Possum, Chapter 23)

STORY 327. March 1, 1913

Happy Jack Squirrel Helps Unc’ Billy Possum.

It is very startling, very startling indeed, to rush into your own storehouse, which you had supposed was empty, and run right into some one sleeping there as if he owned it. It is enough to make any one lose his temper. Happy Jack Squirrel lost his.

And it is very startling, very startling, indeed, to be awakened out of pleasant dreams of warm summer days by having someone suddenly jump on you. It is enough to make any one lose his temper. Unc’ Billy Possum lost his.

So Happy Jack sat outside on a branch of the hollow tree where his old storehouse was and scolded, and called Unc’ Billy Possum names, and jerked his tail angrily with every word he said. And Unc’ Billy Possum sat in the doorway of the hollow tree and showed his teeth to Happy Jack and said unpleasant things. It really was very dreadful the way those two did talk.

But Unc’ Billy Possum is really very good-natured, and when he had gotten over the fright Happy Jack had given him and began to understand that he was in one of Happy Jack’s storehouses, all his temper vanished, and presently he began to grin and then to laugh. Now it always takes two to make a quarrel, and one of the hardest things in the world is to keep cross when the one you are cross with won’t keep cross, too. Happy Jack tried hard to stay angry, but every time he looked at Unc’ Billy Possum’s twinkling eyes and broad grin, Happy Jack lost a little of his own temper. Pretty soon he was laughing just as hard as Unc’ Billy Possum.

“Ho, ho, ho. Ha, ha, ha,” they laughed together. Finally they had to stop for breath.

“What are you doing in my storehouse, Unc’ Billy?” asked Happy Jack, when he could stop laughing.

Then Unc’ Billy told him all about how he had climbed there from another tree, so as to leave no tracks in the snow for Farmer Brown’s boy to follow.

“But now Ah want to go to mah own home in the big hollow tree way down in the Green Forest, but Ah can’t, on account of mah tracks in the snow,” concluded Unc’ Billy mournfully.

Happy Jack put his head on one side and thought very hard. “Why don’t you stay right here until the snow goes, Unc’ Billy?” he asked.

“Because Ah ‘spects that mah ol’ woman am worried most to death,” said Unc’ Billy, in a mournful voice. “Besides,” he added, “Ah just done found out that this right nice lil’ house belongs to one of mah neighbors.” There was a twinkle in Unc’ Billy’s eyes.

Happy Jack laughed. “You’re welcome to stay as long as you like, Unc’ Billy,” he said. “You better stay right where you are, and I’ll go tell old Mrs. Possum where you are.”

“Thank yo’! Thank yo’! That is very kind of yo’, Brer Squirrel. That will be a great help, fo’ it will lift a great load off mah mind,” said Unc’ Billy.

“Don’t mention it, Unc’ Billy!” replied Happy Jack and started off with the message to old Mrs. Possum, and as he scampered through the snow he said:

To get yourself in trouble is the easiest of things;
I notice that to others it always worries brings.
But getting out of trouble is quite the other way—
The more you try to wriggle out, the longer you must stay⁹.

(The Adventures of Unc’ Billy Possum, Chapter 24)

STORY 328. March 3, 1913

Happy Jack Squirrel’s Bright Idea.

Happy Jack Squirrel frisked along through the snow on his way to Unc’ Billy Possum’s house in the big hollow tree in the Green Forest to tell old Mrs. Possum that Unc’ Billy was safe in another hollow tree on the edge of the Green Forest, but that he didn’t dare to come home because he would leave tracks in the snow and then Farmer Brown’s boy might find where they all lived and cut down the tree. He found old Mrs. Possum very much worried and very much out of sorts. You see Unc’ Billy had been gone a long time for him, and she didn’t know what had become of him.

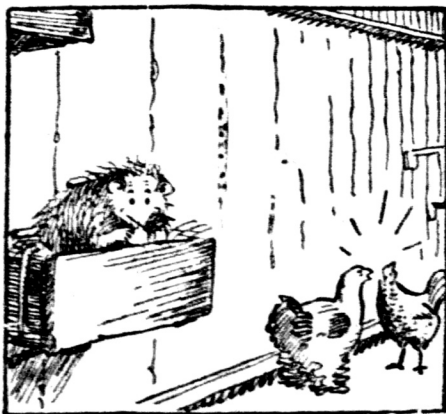
Now of course old Mrs. Possum was very much relieved when she heard that Unc’ Billy was safe, for she had been afraid that something dreadful had happened to him. But just as soon as she knew that he was safe, she forgot all about how worried she had been. All she thought of was how Unc’ Billy had gone to get some fresh eggs to put in his own stomach and left her to take care of herself and eight baby Possums.

“Yo’ tell Unc’ Billy Possum that Ah doan care if he never comes back. Ah done got other things than a worthless, no’count Possum what doan take care of his fam’ly to worry over,” she said crossly, and hurried into the house to see that the eight little Possums were properly tucked in bed, for it was a cold day, and the eight little Possums had to stay in bed to keep warm.

Happy Jack chuckled as he started back to tell Unc’ Billy Possum. He knew perfectly well that old Mrs. Possum didn’t mean what she said. He knew that Unc’ Billy would know that she didn’t mean it. But he knew, and he knew that Unc’ Billy knew, that when he did get home, he would get a great scolding. Then all of a sudden Happy Jack thought of a way for Unc’ Billy to get home without waiting until the snow melted away so that he would leave no tracks for Farmer Brown’s boy to see. That might be a very long time, for there was a great deal of snow on the ground. What do you suppose gave Happy Jack his idea? Why, a tiny little snowflake that hit Happy Jack

9 This poem was significantly revised for the book.

Illustrations. February 24 to March 1, 1913.



322. What the Snow Did



323. Unc' Billy Possum Wishes he Had Snowshoes



324. Farmer Brown's Boy Chops Down a Tree



325. Where Unc' Billy Possum Was



326. Happy Jack Squirrel Makes an Unexpected Call



327. Happy Jack Squirrel Helps Unc' Billy Possum

right on the end of his nose! Yes, sir, it was that tiny little snowflake that gave Happy Jack Squirrel his bright idea.

He hurried back to the hollow tree where Unc' Billy was hiding and scrambled up to the doorway.

"Hello, Unc' Billy! You can go home tonight!" he shouted.

Unc' Billy Possum stuck his head out of the doorway. "What's that yo' say, Brer Squirrel?" he said. "Ah doan see as the snow has gone away, and your tracks are powerful plain to see, and Ah makes bigger tracks than yo', Brer Squirrel."

"Just look up in the sky, Unc' Billy!" said Happy Jack.

Unc' Billy looked. The sky was full of dancing snowflakes. They got in his eyes and clung to his whiskers. Unc' Billy shook his head in disgust.

"Ah doan see anything but mo' snow, and yo' know Ah doan like snow!" he said. "What yo' driving at, Brer Squirrel?"

Happy Jack laughed. "Why, it's just as simple as can be, Unc' Billy!" he cried. "Just as soon as it's dark, you start for home. It's going to snow all night, and in the morning there won't be any tracks. The snowflakes will have covered them all up."

Unc' Billy grinned. "Ah believe yo' are right, Brer Squirrel, Ah believe yo' are right!" said Unc' Billy.

And Happy Jack was right, for Unc' Billy got safely home that very night, and the next morning, when Farmer Brown's boy visited the Green Forest, there wasn't a footprint to be seen anywhere.

(The Adventures of Unc' Billy Possum, Chapter 25)

STORY 329. March 4, 1913

Sammy Jay Makes a Fuss

Sammy Jay doesn't mind the cold of winter. Indeed, he rather likes it. Under his handsome coat of blue, trimmed with white, he wears a warm silky suit of underwear, and he laughs at rough Brother North Wind and his cousin, Jack Frost. So he doesn't mind the cold. But still he doesn't like the winter as well as he does the warmer seasons because—well, because he is a lazy fellow and doesn't like to work for a living any harder than he has to, and in the winter it isn't so easy to get something to eat.

And there is another reason why Sammy Jay doesn't like the winter as well as the other seasons. What do you think it is? It isn't a nice reason at all. No, sir, it isn't a nice reason at all. It is because it isn't so easy to stir up trouble. Somehow, it seems as if Sammy Jay was born to make trouble. He never seems really happy unless he is stirring up trouble for someone else. He just delights in tormenting other little people of the Green Meadows and the Green Forest.

Dear, dear, it is a dreadful thing to say, but Sammy Jay is bold and bad. He steals!

Yes, sir, Sammy Jay steals whenever he gets a chance. He had rather steal a breakfast any time than get it honestly. Now people who steal usually are very sly. Sammy Jay is sly. Indeed, he is one of the slyest of all the little people who live in the Green Forest. Instead of spending his time honestly hunting for his meals, he spends most of it watching his neighbors to find out where they have their storehouses, so that he can help himself when their backs are turned. He slips through the Green Forest as still as still can be, hiding in the thick treetops and behind the trunks of big trees, and peering out with those sharp eyes of his at his neighbors. Whenever he is discovered, he always pretends to be very busy about his own business, and very much surprised to find any one is near.

It was in this way that he had discovered one of the storehouses of Chatterer the Red Squirrel. He didn't let Chatterer know that he had discovered it. O, my, no! He didn't even go near it again for a long time. But he didn't forget it. Sammy Jay never forgets things of that kind, never! He thought of it often and often. When he did, he would say to himself:

Sometime when the snow is deep
And Chatterer is fast asleep,
When Mother Nature is unkind
And things to eat are hard to find,
I'll help myself and fly away
To steal again some other day.

The snow was deep now, and things to eat were hard to find, but Chatterer the Red Squirrel wasn't asleep. O, my, no, indeed! Chatterer seemed to like the cold weather and was as frisky and spry as ever he is. And he never went very far away from that storehouse. Sammy Jay watched and watched, but never once did he get a chance to steal the sweet acorns that he had seen Chatterer store away in the fall.

"H-m-m!" said Sammy Jay to himself, "I must do something to get Chatterer away from his storehouse."

For a long time Sammy Jay sat in the top of a tall, dark pine tree, thinking and thinking. Then his sharp eyes twinkled with a look of great cunning, and he chuckled. It was a naughty chuckle. Off he flew to a very thick spruce tree some distance away in the Green Forest, but where Chatterer the Red Squirrel could hear him. There Sammy Jay began to make a great fuss. He screamed and screeched as only he can. Pretty soon, just as he expected, he saw Chatterer the Red Squirrel hurrying over to see what the fuss was all about. Sammy Jay slipped out of the other side of the spruce tree and without a sound hurried over to Chatterer's storehouse.

(The Adventures of Sammy Jay, Chapter 1)

STORY 330. March 5, 1913

A Bitter Disappointment.

As he flew through the Green Forest, Sammy Jay chuckled and chuckled to

himself. It wasn't a good chuckle to hear. No, indeed, it wasn't a good chuckle. It was the kind of chuckle that only folks who are doing wrong, and think they are smart because they are doing wrong, use. Sammy Jay thought that he was smart, very smart indeed. He had screamed and shrieked and made a great fuss over nothing at all until Chatterer the Red Squirrel had come hurrying over to find out what it all meant. Then Sammy Jay had slipped away unseen and come straight to the storehouse of Chatterer the Red Squirrel.

This particular storehouse had once been the home of Blacky the Crow. When Blacky deserted it for a new home, Chatterer had taken it for a storehouse. He had roofed it over, and he had stored away nuts and acorns in it all through the pleasant fall. Sammy Jay had watched him. He had seen those sweet acorns and nuts put there, and he had never forgotten them. Now, with the snow deep on the ground, the easiest way to get a good meal that he knew of was to steal some of those very acorns. So he chuckled as he pulled apart the roof of Chatterer's storehouse in search of those acorns.

Now Chatterer the Red Squirrel is quite as smart as Sammy Jay. Indeed, he is very much like Sammy Jay, for he is a mischief maker and a thief himself. So, because people who do wrong always are on the watch for others to do wrong, Chatterer the Red Squirrel had kept his sharp eyes wide open all the time he had been filling his storehouse in the fall, and he had spied Sammy Jay's smart blue coat when Sammy had thought himself nicely hidden. Chatterer had known what Sammy Jay was hiding there for. His sharp eyes snapped, but he went right on filling his storehouse just the same.

Then, just as soon as he was sure that Sammy Jay had gone away, Chatterer had taken out every one of the sweet acorns and put them in another storehouse inside a hollow tree. He had left nothing but hickory nuts, for he knew that these are too hard for Sammy Jay to crack.

But Sammy Jay didn't know anything about this, and so now, as he broke his way into the storehouse, he chuckled greedily. Pretty soon he had a hole big enough to stick his head in, and his mouth watered as he reached in for a sweet acorn. All he could find were hard hickory nuts. What did it mean? In a great rage, Sammy Jay began to tear the store-house to pieces. There must be some sweet acorns there somewhere! Hadn't he seen Chatterer put them there? He forgot that he was stealing. He forgot everything except his disappointment, and the more he thought of this, the angrier he grew. He would have pulled the store-house all to pieces, if Chatterer himself hadn't come home.

Sammy Jay had just stopped for breath when he heard the rattle of claws on the bark of the tree. He knew what that meant, and he didn't wait to look down. He just spread his blue wings and with a scream of rage flew over to the next tree. Then such a dreadful noise as there was in the Green Forest!

"Robber!" screamed Chatterer the Red Squirrel, dancing up and down, he was so angry.

"Thief yourself!" screamed Sammy Jay.

It was a dreadful quarrel, and all the little forest people who were within hearing stopped their ears.

STORY 331. March 6, 1913

The Vanity of Sammy Jay.

When Sammy Jay isn't planning mischief, or sticking his bill into the affairs of other folks with which he has no concern, or trying to frighten someone bigger than himself or scare someone smaller than himself, he spends a great deal of his time admiring his fine clothes and thinking what a handsome fellow he is. And he is a handsome fellow. Even Chatterer the Red Squirrel, who is always quarreling with him, admits that Sammy Jay is a handsome fellow. He carries himself proudly when he thinks any one is looking. His shape is very trim and neat, and he is a very smart looking fellow indeed. And his coat! Was there ever such a coat before? It seems as if Old Mother Nature must have cut off a little piece of the sky when it was bluest on a summer day to make Sammy Jay's coat, and that she must have taken a tiny strip from the whitest cloud to trim it with. And then she gave him a smart cap and a black collar and a waistcoat of just the softest grayish white, that shows off his blue coat best. Old Mother Nature certainly was feeling very good indeed when she planned Sammy Jay's clothes.

Now, Sammy Jay knows just how handsome he is. If you should ask him, and he would condescend to talk to you at all, which he probably wouldn't do, he would tell you that he is the handsomest fellow in the world. Of course this isn't true, but Sammy Jay thinks it is. And so Sammy Jay is very fond of showing off his fine clothes and making fun of other people who are not so finely dressed. He spends a great deal of time in the care of his beautiful coat and in admiring himself whenever he can see his reflection in a little pool of water.

Now, Peter Rabbit isn't the least bit like Sammy Jay. He doesn't think about his clothes at all. Indeed, Peter thinks so little about his clothes that it doesn't trouble him a bit to wear a white patch on the seat of his trousers. And Peter dearly loves to make fun of Sammy Jay.

So it tickled Peter immensely one day to find Sammy Jay admiring himself. Peter had come up through the Green Forest without making a sound, for with the snow covering the ground, there were no dead leaves to rustle. As usual, his long ears were cocked up to catch every sound. Suddenly Peter stopped. He had heard Sammy Jay's voice, and by the sound, Peter knew that Sammy was talking to himself. Very, very softly Peter stole forward and hid where he could see Sammy Jay in a big pine tree.

"I've got the handsomest coat in all the Green Forest!" said Sammy Jay, stretching one of his wings out and cocking his head on one side to admire it. "And where else is such a beautiful tail to be found?" He spread his tail so that a ray of sunshine would fall on it. It certainly was very beautiful, as blue as the sky, with a little band of white across the tip and little bars of black across the outer sides. Even Peter Rabbit, with his nose turned up in scorn, had to admit to himself that it certainly was a handsome tail.

“I’m so glad it’s mine!” sighed Sammy Jay. “It must be dreadful not to be handsome.”

Peter Rabbit could keep still no longer. “It’s a good thing you admire yourself, Sammy Jay, because no one else does!” he shouted.

Handsome is as it may do!
Don’t forget that, Sammy Jay.
Underneath that coat of blue
Is a black heart, Sammy Jay.
Everybody near and far
Knows you for just what you are—
Of all mischief makers chief;
Handsome clothes won’t hide a thief.”

Sammy Jay flew into a rage, but when he opened his mouth to call Peter names, all he could say was “Thief! thief! thief!”

“What did I tell you?” said Peter Rabbit, grinning.

(The Adventures of Sammy Jay, Chapter 3)

STORY 332. March 7, 1913

Sammy Jay Gets Even With Peter Rabbit

“I’ll get even with you, Peter Rabbit! I’ll get even with you!” Sammy Jay fairly hopped up and down on the branch of the big pine, he was so angry. Peter just thrust his tongue into one cheek in the sauciest way and then laughed at Sammy Jay. You see, Peter had overheard Sammy Jay admiring himself and had called him vain, and worse than that—a thief.

Of course it is true, as every one in the Green Forest and on the Green Meadows knows, that Sammy Jay is a thief. But no one likes to be told that he is a thief, even if he is, Sammy Jay least of all. Like a great many other people who do wrong, Sammy Jay likes to pretend that he is a very fine gentleman, and he wants other people to think so too. So he takes great care of his handsome blue coat and struts around a great deal when he thinks other folks are looking at him.

So Sammy Jay studied and studied how he could get even with Peter Rabbit. He called Peter names whenever he saw him, but Peter didn’t mind that in the least, for he could call names back again. Besides, names never hurt, and it is very foolish to call them. So Sammy Jay studied and studied how he could get even with Peter Rabbit in some other way. Then one day, as he sat in the big pine tree studying, Sammy heard a voice that gave him an idea. It was the voice of Redtail the Hawk, who, you know, is own cousin to old Whitetail and to Roughleg. Now Sammy Jay can scream so exactly like Redtail the Hawk that you cannot tell their voices apart. When he heard that scream, Sammy Jay chuckled out loud. He had thought of a plan to get even with Peter Rabbit.

Every day after that, Sammy Jay went peeking and prying through the Green Forest and around the edge of the Green Meadows without making a sound, just watching for Peter Rabbit. The snow was almost all gone, and that is how it happened that Redtail had come back from the South where he had spent the winter. Sammy Jay felt quite sure that Peter didn't know that Redtail was back yet. He hoped he didn't, anyway.

Early one morning, Sammy Jay sat hidden on the edge of the Green Forest, watching the old briar patch where Peter Rabbit lives. He saw Peter come out of one of his private little paths and sit up very straight. For a long time Peter sat looking this way and looking that way over the Green Meadows. When he was sure that Reddy and Granny Fox were nowhere about, and that Roughleg and old Whitetail were nowhere in sight, Peter kicked up his heels and scampered out on to the Green Meadows away from the dear old briar patch to see if there were any signs of spring.

Sammy waited until Peter had reached the big hickory tree over by the Smiling Pool, then very silently he flew over to the big hickory tree. Peter was so busy looking for Jerry Muskrat that he didn't see Sammy Jay at all. Suddenly, right over Peter's head, sounded a fierce, shrill scream. Peter knew that voice. At least, he thought he did. He didn't stop to look. He had learned long ago that it is best to run first and look afterward. So now he started for the dear old briar patch as fast as his long legs would take him, his heart in his mouth.

Again that fierce scream sounded right over him. Peter ran faster than ever, and as he ran, he dodged this way and dodged that way. Every second he expected to feel the sharp claws of Redtail the Hawk. My, such jumps as Peter did take! It seemed to him that he never would reach the dear old briar patch. But he did, and just as soon as he was safely inside, he turned around to see what had become of Redtail. And what do you think he saw? Why, only Sammy Jay laughing fit to kill himself.

"Fraidcat! Fraidcat!" shouted Sammy Jay.

Peter shook his fist. Then he grinned foolishly. "I guess you are even, Sammy Jay!" he said.

(The Adventures of Sammy Jay, Chapter 4)

STORY 333. March 8, 1913

The First Messenger.

Peter Rabbit was late that morning in getting over to the dear old briar patch. In fact, jolly round red Mr. Sun had been out of bed some time when Peter left the Green Forest and started across the Green Meadows toward the dear old briar patch. He had gone only a little way when he heard something that made him stop short, sit up as straight as he could, and prick up his long ears. What was it? Why, Peter wasn't sure himself what it was. He thought, he just thought, that he heard a whistle. But he wasn't sure of it, and the only way to make sure was to sit still and listen.

Now, one of the hardest things in the world is to sit still when you are excited. Yes, sir, it surely is one of the hardest things in the world to do. Peter Rabbit found it so. You see, Peter was excited—very much excited. But somehow, he managed to sit still. He listened and listened and listened, and he looked and looked and looked. By-and-by he heard it again. It was a whistle, and Peter kicked up his heels and turned a somersault for very joy. Then he sat up very straight again and looked this way and looked that way for the whistler.

“It’s too good to be true! It certainly is too good to be true, and I really can’t believe it until I see the whistler! Somebody may be fooling me. Maybe it’s that smart Sammy Jay!” Peter looked about very suspiciously as he said this. But all the time he knew right down in his heart that no one could fool him with that whistle.

It was such a soft, beautiful whistle. It seemed to come from, here, from there, from everywhere all at once. It sounded a long, long way off, and yet Peter knew that the whistler might be right close at hand. Then again it sounded as if it was close by, and all the time Peter knew that just as likely as not the whistler was a long way off. It really was of no use at all to try to find the whistler by his whistle.

So pretty soon Peter gave it up and instead began to look through the top of every tree. But the whistler wasn’t in a treetop. Then Peter remembered something. Eagerly he looked along the nearest old rail fence. Ha! there on top of one of the fence posts was a tiny patch of the most beautiful blue. It was even more beautiful than Sammy Jay’s beautiful coat. Peter’s heart gave a great leap of joy, and he started in the direction of the old fence post as fast as his long legs would take him.

“Hello, Winsome!” cried Peter when, quite out of breath, he reached the fence post.

Winsome Bluebird, for it was he, looked down from the fence post and smiled at Peter Rabbit “Hello yourself, Peter Rabbit!” he cried cheerily.

“O, Winsome, I’m so glad to see you!” exclaimed Peter “Have you really come to stay? Have you come far? Is anybody with you? Where did you spend the winter? Tell me all the news! How beautiful your coat is!”

Winsome Bluebird laughed. “You’re just the same old Peter; you haven’t changed a bit,” he said. “But I haven’t time to tell you all the news because—”

“Because what?” asked Peter impatiently.

“Because I mustn’t stop to talk. You see I have a duty to perform,” replied Winsome proudly.

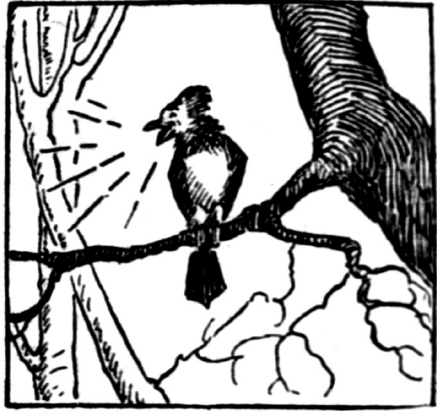
“And what is that? Do tell me, Winsome!” begged Peter

“It is to spread the news all over the Green Meadows and through the Green Forest that close behind me comes gentle Sister South Wind, and with her is Mistress Spring. Do you know, Peter Rabbit, I think it is one of the most beautiful things in the world to be the messenger of good news? You don’t know how happy it makes me feel. Now I must hurry on, for all the world is waiting for me. Good-by, Peter Rabbit.” Winsome

Illustrations. March 3 to March 8, 1913.



328. Happy Jack Squirrel's Bright Idea



329. Sammy Jay Makes a Fuss



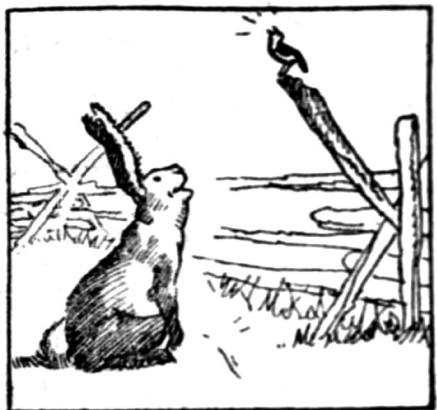
330. A Bitter Disappointment



331. The Vanity of Sammy Jay



332. Sammy Jay Gets Even with Peter Rabbit



333. The First Messenger

spread his blue wings, whistled softly and was gone.

(The Bedtime Story Calendar, #10)

STORY 334. March 10, 1913

Peter Rabbit Spreads the News.

Peter Rabbit was so excited that he forgot all about going home to the dear old briar patch. He forgot that he had been up all night and that he ought to go home and sleep a little. Indeed, Peter was so excited that three times he stubbed his toes and nearly fell flat on his way to the Green Forest. You see Peter had news, good news, to tell, and Peter is never so happy as when he is telling news.

The first Peter ran across was Happy Jack Squirrel. "Hi, Happy Jack! I've got some great news!" cried Peter.

Happy Jack grinned. Peter Rabbit always had great news. At least Peter always thought it was great.

"Well, what is it this time?" asked Happy Jack.

"Winsome Bluebird has just arrived!" cried Peter "And he says that gentle Sister South Wind and Mistress Spring are close behind."

"It's too good to be true," declared Happy Jack. "Are you sure you saw Winsome Bluebird?"

"Listen!" said Peter, pricking up his long ears. Happy Jack listened. The sweetest of whistles came to his little round ears. It seemed to come from nowhere in particular, yet from everywhere.

"Hurrah!" cried Happy Jack. "It is Winsome Bluebird!" And round and round he chased his tail just for joy.

But Peter Rabbit didn't stop to watch him. Peter just hurried along, bursting with the news. He stopped at Unc' Billy Possum's house in the big hollow tree. He knocked a long time before any one answered. Finally old Mrs. Possum poked her head out.

"What do you want. Peter Rabbit?" she asked crossly. Peter told her the news. Old Mrs Possum looked at Peter sharply to be sure that he was telling the truth. Then she turned. "Get up, yo' alls!" she snapped. "Ah done got to do mah house cleaning!"

Peter hurried on to tell Jimmy Skunk. Jimmy was sleepy and cross, too sleepy and cross to believe what Peter said, so Peter hurried over to Bobby Coon's house. He knocked and he knocked at the big hollow tree where Bobby Coon lives, but the only reply he got was an occasional snore from Bobby Coon. At last Peter gave it up and started for the Smiling Pool to see if Jerry Muskrat was anywhere about. When he got there he found that the Smiling Pool was still covered with ice and if Jerry Muskrat was there he was in his house or his castle where Peter could not reach him.

"O, dear!" sighed Peter Rabbit "It is dreadful to have such splendid news and not

be able to tell people.”

You know Peter is a great gossip and nothing pleases him quite so much as to be the first to tell a piece of news. When he told Sammy Jay, Sammy just turned up his nose. “Pooh!” said he, “I heard that long ago!” Now this wasn’t true, for he had only just heard it a few minutes before. In fact, he had heard the whistle of Winsome Bluebird himself.

Peter almost ran his legs off that day carrying the news and when finally he did get home to the dear old briar patch there was Danny Meadow Mouse worried almost to death for fear that something dreadful had happened to Peter

“Why, I only stayed away to tell the news,” said Peter sleepily.

“What news?” asked Danny Meadow Mouse.

Peter’s eyes flew wide open. “Why, hadn’t you heard?” he cried. “Winsome Bluebird has arrived and gentle Sister South Wind and Mistress Spring are close behind!”

Danny Meadow Mouse drew a long breath. “I must get ready right away to move back to my home in the Green Meadows as soon as they arrive!” he exclaimed.

(The Bedtime Story Calendar, # 11)

STORY 335. March 11, 1913

Gentle Sister South Wind Arrives.

Good news, good news for everyone, above or down below,
For Master Winsome Bluebird’s come to whistle off the snow!

All the Green Meadows and all the Green Forest had heard the news. Peter Rabbit had seen to that. And just as soon as each of the little meadow and forest folks heard it, he hurried out to listen for himself and make sure that it was true. And each, when he heard that sweet voice of Winsome Bluebird, had kicked up his heels and shouted “Hurrah!”

You see they all knew that Winsome Bluebird never, never is very far ahead of gentle Sister South Wind, and that when she arrives, blustering, rough Brother North Wind is already on his way back to the cold, cold land where the ice never melts.

Of course, Winsome Bluebird doesn’t really whistle off the snow, but after he comes, the snow disappears so fast that it seems as if he did. It is surprising what a difference a little good news makes. Of course, nothing had really changed that first day when Winsome Bluebird’s whistle was heard on the Green Meadows and in the Green Forest, but it seemed as if everything had changed. And it was all because that sweet whistle was a promise, a promise that everyone knew would come true. And so there was joy in all the hearts on the Green Meadows and in the Green Forest. Even grim old Granny Fox felt it, and as for Reddy Fox, why, Reddy even shouted good-naturedly to Peter Rabbit and hoped he was feeling well.

And then gentle Sister South Wind arrived. She came in the night, and in the morning there she was, hard at work making the Green Meadows and the Green Forest ready for Mistress Spring. She broke the icy bands that had bound the Smiling Pool and the Laughing Brook so long; and the Smiling Pool began to smile once more, and the Laughing Brook to gurgle and then to laugh and finally to sing merrily.

She touched the little banks of snow that remained, and straightway they melted and disappeared. She kissed the eight babies of Unc' Billy Possum, and they kicked off the bedclothes under which old Mrs. Possum had tucked them and scrambled out of the big hollow tree to play.

She peeped in at the door of Johnny Chuck and called softly, and Johnny Chuck awoke from his long sleep and yawned and began to think about getting up. She knocked at the door of Digger the Badger, and Digger awoke. She tickled the nose of Striped Chipmunk, who was about half awake, and Striped Chipmunk sneezed and then he hopped out of bed and hurried up to his doorway to shout good morning after her, as she hurried over to see if Bobby Coon was still sleeping.

Peter Rabbit followed her about. He couldn't understand it at all. Peter had smiled to himself when he heard how softly she had called at the doorway of Johnny Chuck's house, for many and many a time during the long winter Peter had stopped at Johnny Chuck's house and shouted down the long hall at the top of his voice without once waking Johnny Chuck. Now Peter nearly tumbled over with surprise, as he heard Johnny Chuck yawn at the first low call of gentle Sister South Wind.

"How does she do it? I don't understand it at all," said Peter, as he scratched his long left ear with his long left hind leg.

Gentle Sister South Wind smiled at Peter. "There are a lot of things in this world that you will never understand, Peter Rabbit. You will just have to believe them without understanding them and be content to know that they are so," she said, and hurried over to the Green Forest to tell Unc' Billy Possum that his old friend, Ol' Mistah Buzzard, was on his way up from ol' Virginy.

(The Adventures of Johnny Chuck, Chapter 1)

STORY 336. March 12, 1913

Johnny Chuck Receives Callers.

The morning after gentle Sister South Wind arrived on the Green Meadows, Peter Rabbit came hopping and skipping down the Lone Little Path from the Green Forest. Peter was happy. He didn't know why. He just was happy. It was in the air. Everybody else seemed happy, too. Peter had to stop every few minutes just to kick up his heels and try to jump over his own shadow. He had felt just that way ever since gentle Sister South Wind arrived.

I simply have to kick and dance!
I cannot help but gaily prance!
Somehow, I feel it in my toes
Whenever gentle South Wind blows.

So sang Peter Rabbit as he hopped and skipped down the Lone Little Path. Suddenly he stopped right in the middle of the verse. He sat up very straight and stared down at Johnny Chuck's house. Someone was sitting on Johnny Chuck's door-step. It looked like Johnny Chuck. No, it looked like the shadow of Johnny Chuck. Peter rubbed his eyes and looked again. Then he hurried as fast as he could, lipperty-lipperty-lip. The nearer he got, the less like Johnny Chuck looked the one sitting on Johnny Chuck's doorstep. Johnny Chuck had gone to sleep round and fat and roly-poly—so fat he could hardly waddle. This fellow was thin, even thinner than Peter Rabbit himself. He waved a thin hand to Peter.

"Hello, Peter Rabbit! I told you that I would see you in the spring. How did you stand the long winter?"

That certainly was Johnny Chuck's voice. Peter was so delighted that in his hurry he fell over his own feet. "Is it really and truly you, Johnny Chuck?" he cried.

"Of course, it's me; who did you think it was?" replied Johnny Chuck rather crossly, for Peter was staring at him as if he had never seen him before.

"I—I—I didn't know," confessed Peter Rabbit. "I thought it was you and I thought it wasn't you. What have you been doing to yourself, Johnny Chuck? Your coat looks three sizes too big for you, and when I last saw you it didn't look big enough." Peter hopped all around Johnny Chuck, looking at him as if he didn't believe his own eyes.

"O, Johnny's all right. He's just been living on his own fat," said another voice. It was Jimmy Skunk who had spoken, and he now stood holding out his hand to Johnny Chuck and grinning good-naturedly. He had come up without either of the others seeing him.

Peter's big eyes opened wider than ever. "Do you mean to say that he has been eating his own fat?" he gasped.

Johnny Chuck and Jimmy Skunk both laughed. "No," said Jimmy Skunk, "he didn't eat it, but he lived on it just the same while he was asleep all winter. Don't you see he hasn't got a bit of fat on him now?"

"But how could he live on it, if he didn't eat it?" asked Peter, staring at Johnny Chuck as if he had never seen him before.

Jimmy Skunk shrugged his shoulders. "Don't ask me. That is one of Old Mother Nature's secrets; you'll have to ask her," he replied.

"And don't ask me," said Johnny Chuck, "for I've been asleep all the time. My, but I'm hungry!"

"So am I!" said another voice. There was Reddy Fox grinning at them. Johnny Chuck dove into the doorway of his house with Peter Rabbit at his heels, for there was

nowhere else to go. Jimmy Skunk just stood still and chuckled. He knew that Reddy Fox didn't dare touch him.

(The Adventures of Johnny Chuck, Chapter 2)

STORY 337. March 13, 1913

Jimmy Skunk Sees Peter Rabbit Home

Reddy Fox stretched himself out comfortably behind a little pile of sand just back of Johnny Chuck's house and grinned at Jimmy Skunk.

"What are you going to do there?" asked Jimmy Skunk.

"Wait for my dinner," replied Reddy Fox, and grinned again.

"Wait for your dinner!" exclaimed Jimmy Skunk.

"That's what I said; wait for my dinner!" said Reddy. "Didn't you see it run in there just now?"

"Do you mean Peter Rabbit?" Jimmy Skunk looked at Reddy Fox sharply as he spoke.

"Who else should I mean?" replied Reddy. "I've been trying ever since last Summer to catch him, and now I'm going to stay right here until he comes out, if I have to stay all day and all night. And when he does come out, as he will when he thinks I've gone away, then—" Reddy didn't finish. He just licked his lips in such a hungry way that he didn't need to say anything.

Jimmy Skunk sat down on Johnny Chuck's doorstep and scratched his head thoughtfully. Jimmy didn't often meddle in the affairs of other people. He usually minded his own business and left other people to attend to theirs. There really was no reason for him to interfere now. Peter Rabbit ought to have kept his eyes open and have seen Reddy Fox creeping up instead of being so surprised that he had to dodge into Johnny Chuck's house because there wasn't time to run. It served Peter right to be caught in such a fix. Besides he owed Peter something for the tricks Peter had played on him.

Jimmy looked over at Reddy Fox. Reddy's eyes were half closed, but Jimmy could see the hungry look in them, even then—a hungry, cruel look. Jimmy made up his mind. He didn't love Reddy Fox, not a bit. And he did love Peter Rabbit, in spite of his tricks. Why, what would the Green Meadows and the Green Forest be without Peter Rabbit? Jimmy Skunk sighed. "I guess I've got to get him out of this scrape," said he.

"What's that?" asked Reddy Fox sharply.

Jimmy Skunk didn't pay the least bit of attention to Reddy Fox. Instead, he stuck his head in the doorway of Johnny Chuck's house and called to Peter Rabbit. Reddy Fox hopped up and came forward angrily. But he didn't come too near. Oh, my, no! Reddy Fox has a very wholesome respect for Jimmy Skunk, and he took the very best of care not to get too near.

“Reddy Fox is out here and he says he’s going to stay until you come out, said Jimmy Skunk. Reddy Fox gritted his teeth and snarled at Jimmy Skunk, but he didn’t go any nearer.

“Oh, dear, what shall I do?” wailed Peter Rabbit.

“Come out right now,” replied Jimmy Skunk.

“But Reddy Fox will get me!” cried Peter in dismay.

“No, he won’t, because I’m going to see you home,” replied Jimmy Skunk. Reddy Fox gritted his teeth and snarled again.

It took a lot of talking to induce Peter Rabbit to come out, but finally he did. His heart thumped with fright when he saw Reddy Fox, and he looked as if he would run at the first move Reddy made, and this was just what Reddy hoped that he would do. But Jimmy Skunk wouldn’t let him.

“Now,” said Jimmy Skunk, “you stay tight close to me and Reddy Fox won’t dare to touch you.”

Then they started for the dear old briar patch. Peter kept right close to Jimmy Skunk. It seemed to Peter that they never would reach the old briar patch, for Jimmy Skunk never hurries, and he wouldn’t hurry now. Reddy Fox followed all the way, making sudden rushes in the hope of frightening Peter so that he would run, and all the time calling Jimmy Skunk all the bad names he could think of. When they reached the old briar patch Reddy slunk away growling, “I’ll get even with you for this, Jimmy Skunk.”

“So will I,” cried Peter Rabbit, gratefully. “I’ll never play tricks upon you any more, Jimmy Skunk!”

STORY 338. March 14, 1913.

Reddy Fox Plans to Get Even with Jimmy Skunk.

Hate is like a little weed—
It grows and grows and grows.
With every little ugly deed
It grows and grows and grows.
When in the garden of your heart
It once has gained a little start
It crowds out every blossom fair
That gentle Love has planted there,
And grows and grows and grows.

Hate was in the heart of Reddy Fox, hate of Jimmy Skunk. Yes, sir, Reddy Fox hated Jimmy Skunk! What had Jimmy Skunk done? Why, he had kept Reddy Fox from catching Peter Rabbit. And so Reddy Fox hated him. And he hated him still more because he has a very wholesome respect for Jimmy Skunk’s ability to take care of

himself. You see, Reddy Fox is really a coward at heart. He didn't dare to openly fight with Jimmy Skunk. No, sir, he didn't dare.

And so Reddy Fox spent all his spare time studying and studying how he could get even with Jimmy Skunk without danger to himself. First, he tried to think of someone who wasn't afraid of Jimmy Skunk whom he could get to help him. But there wasn't one. Think as hard as ever he could, he couldn't think of anyone who would or could help him get even with Jimmy Skunk. You see, everybody else had just as much respect for Jimmy Skunk's ability to take care of himself as Reddy Fox had.

Now, Reddy didn't let Jimmy Skunk know that he was studying and studying how he could get even. O, my, no! No, indeed! Reddy Fox is too sly and deceitful for that. He pretended to have forgotten all about his threat to get even, and whenever he met Jimmy Skunk he was as polite as he knew how to be, and no one can be any more polite than Reddy Fox. But all the time he was thinking and thinking how he could get even.

Now, of course, Peter Rabbit had heard Reddy Fox make that threat, and it troubled Peter a great deal. In fact, it troubled Peter a great deal more than it did Jimmy Skunk. Indeed, it didn't trouble Jimmy at all. He is such a lazy, good natured little fellow, and so sure that he can take care of himself, that he doesn't worry about anything. But Peter Rabbit worried. You see, Peter had had so many narrow escapes from Reddy Fox that he was very suspicious, and the more he saw of Reddy's politeness the more suspicious he grew.

"You better watch out for Reddy Fox," he would say every time he met Jimmy Skunk.

Jimmy would just laugh in his lazy way and say that he wasn't afraid.

"Why I'm not afraid of anybody or anything except Farmer Brown's boy and his dreadful gun," said Jimmy one day as he stopped on the edge of the dear old briar patch to pass the time of day with Peter Rabbit. And Jimmy wasn't boasting when he said that. He wasn't boasting a bit, because, you know, it was true.

Now, it just happened that Reddy Fox was snooping around the old briar patch that morning and he overheard what Jimmy Skunk said. Reddy just lay low so that Jimmy Skunk and Peter Rabbit shouldn't know that he was about, and then as soon as he got a chance he stole away to the Green Forest, and there was an unpleasant grin on the face of Reddy Fox.

"So," said Reddy to himself, "there is someone Jimmy Skunk is afraid of! I wonder why I didn't think of Farmer Brown's boy before."

For a long time, Reddy lay in his secret hiding place in the Green Forest studying and studying how he could get even with Jimmy Skunk, and the longer he studied the greater grew the hate in his heart. At last, he hopped up and kicked his heels.

"I have a plan! Now we'll see if I don't get even with you, Mr Smarty!" he exclaimed.

STORY 339. March 15, 1913

Reddy Fox is Very Busy.

Of all the little people who live in the Green Forest and on the Green Meadows there is not one who dislikes work more than Reddy Fox does unless—why, unless it is work that means mischief. Then Reddy Fox will work as hard as anyone.

If mischief happens to come near,
Reddy lends a willing ear;
Her bidding does with hearty will
Though to his neighbors it means ill.

That is the kind of a fellow Reddy Fox is. But, like all other people who like to do mean things, he doesn't like to be found out. He likes to be thought a very fine gentleman. And this is why he is so sly. He never does things boldly and openly where everybody can see. O my, no! He does his mean acts in a sneaky way, when he is very sure that no one is looking. And all the time that he is planning to do a mean thing to someone he will pretend to be the very best of friends with that one.

It was so with Jimmy Skunk. Reddy Fox hated Jimmy Skunk because Jimmy had helped Peter Rabbit to get away from Reddy. But now Reddy pretended to have forgotten all about it, and whenever he met Jimmy Skunk he was just as pleasant as he knew how to be, and that is very pleasant, indeed. And all the time he was planning to get even with Jimmy Skunk. So Reddy Fox spent every minute he could spare in planning to get even with Jimmy Skunk.

He watched Jimmy Skunk. He stole along behind him wherever he went, watching and waiting. Now, Jimmy Skunk had not been near Farmer Brown's henhouse for a long time—not since Unc' Billy Possum was held a prisoner there¹⁰—and Jimmy was getting dreadfully hungry for fresh eggs. So, one dark night he started for Farmer Brown's henhouse. Now, Jimmy knew all about the traps that Farmer Brown's boy had set, so he was very careful. But Farmer Brown's boy had become discouraged and had taken up the traps. When Jimmy found this out he smiled to himself in the dark and boldly walked right into the henhouse.

This was the chance Reddy Fox had been waiting for. While Jimmy was busy with the eggs, Reddy stole in behind him and suddenly sprang up at the hens sitting high on the perches with their heads tucked under their wings. He couldn't reach them to do them any harm, but he did give them a dreadful fright, and this was what he wanted to do. My, my, my! Such a screaming and squawking as broke out in Farmer Brown's henhouse! Reddy Fox slipped out like a shadow, and, chuckling to himself, sped away to the Green Forest. He had been so quiet that Jimmy Skunk didn't hear him and didn't even know what had waked the biddies up. But he did know that with such a racket going on this was no place for him, and he hurried—actually hurried—out the way he had come in.

He was hardly out of sight when Farmer Brown's boy, half-dressed, appeared at

10 STORY 320, 1913.

the henhouse door with a lantern and his dreadful gun. The first thing he saw was the shell of the egg Jimmy Skunk had been eating when Reddy Fox frightened the hens. He knew right away who had been there, and, of course, he thought that Jimmy had frightened the hens.

“We’ll have a hunt for that skunk tomorrow!” declared Farmer Brown’s boy as he went back to bed.

No sooner was all quiet than Reddy Fox stole back and crept into the henhouse. A foolish young chicken was roosting low, and in a flash Reddy had it without waking the others. Hurrying to the Green Forest, he hid himself where he could watch the house of Jimmy Skunk. Just about daylight he saw Jimmy come home. Reddy waited a little, then he sneaked over and laid the chicken on Jimmy Skunk’s doorstep.

“Now,” said Reddy, “when Farmer Brown’s boy finds that he’ll dig out Jimmy Skunk and that will be the end of him,” He grinned wickedly as he trotted off home.

STORY 340. March 17, 1913

Peter Rabbit is Troubled

Reddy Fox had hardly disappeared in the Green Forest after laying a plump chicken on Jimmy Skunk’s doorstep when Peter Rabbit came hurrying along the Crooked Little Path down the hill on his way home to the dear old briar patch for his morning nap. Ever since Jimmy Skunk had seen Peter safe home the day that Reddy Fox thought he had Peter trapped in Johnny Chuck’s house, Peter had had a tender place in his heart for Jimmy Skunk. And so he had formed the habit of passing near Jimmy Skunk’s house whenever he could just to say “Hello” if Jimmy happened to be about.

This morning Peter was just a little late, so he did not really expect to see anything of Jimmy. As he hurried down the Crooked Little Path, lipperty-lipperty-lip, Peter looked over to Jimmy Skunk’s house, and of course right away he saw the plump chicken. Peter stopped short and sat up with a whistle of surprise. He knew that Jimmy did sometimes steal a chicken, so he was not surprised that Jimmy should have stolen one during the night just past, for it had been a dark night, just the kind of a night to visit Farmer Brown’s henhouse. But he was surprised that Jimmy should have brought the chicken home with him.

To be sure, Jimmy Skunk is such an easy going, lazy fellow that he is often very careless. But to leave a plump chicken right out in plain sight on his own doorstep! That was the very craziest thing of all the crazy things that Peter had ever heard of Jimmy Skunk doing. Why, supposing Farmer Brown’s boy should happen along! He would see the chicken the very first thing, and he would know right away that that was Jimmy Skunk’s house. Peter didn’t like to think of what might happen then.

Now, it was none of Peter’s business. No, certainly not! If Jimmy Skunk chose to be so foolish as to leave one of Farmer Brown’s chickens right out in plain sight on his own doorstep, why should Peter worry about it? Peter started on down the Crooked

Illustrations. March 10 to March 15, 1913.



334. Peter Rabbit Spreads the News



335. Gentle Sister South Wind Arrives



336. Johnny Chuck Receives Callers



337. Jimmy Skunk Sees Peter Rabbit Home



338. Reddy Fox Plans to Get Even with Jimmy Skunk



339. Reddy Fox is Very Busy

Little Path. Then he stopped again. There was something very queer about that chicken. He must go have a clearer look at it. Very carefully Peter Rabbit approached Jimmy Skunk's doorstep. Perhaps there might be a trap there. Peter walked around and around the chicken until he was sure that there was no trap. Then he went a little nearer.

Ha! What was that? Peter stooped over and looked closer. It looked like—yes, it surely was the footprint of Reddy Fox! There was no doubt about it. Peter looked this way and looked that way hurriedly to make sure that Reddy was not about. But he was nowhere to be seen, and Peter gave a great sigh of relief. If Reddy Fox had been there since the chicken was left there, why hadn't Reddy taken it? It wasn't because he was above stealing from his neighbors. No one knew that better than Peter Rabbit did. Peter didn't like the looks of things a bit. He sat down and scratched his head. Then a bright idea came to him. He would ask Jimmy Skunk what it meant. Why hadn't he thought of it before?

So Peter put his head in at Jimmy Skunk's doorway and called to Jimmy Skunk. Jimmy didn't answer. Peter called again, and still Jimmy didn't answer. Then Peter listened. He could hear Jimmy Skunk snoring way down in his bedroom underground. Shout as he would, Peter couldn't waken him. Finally he gave it up and once more started for the dear old briar patch, but every few feet he would stop and shake his head, for he was troubled, very much troubled.

"I believe Reddy Fox knows something about that chicken on Jimmy Skunk's doorstep, and if he does it means trouble for Jimmy Skunk," said Peter.

STORY 341. March 18, 1913

Billy Mink Receives a Caller.

Billy Mink sat on the Big Rock in the middle of the Smiling Pool. He had been fishing all the morning, but for some reason the fish were too smart for him and he had not caught so much as the smallest minnow. He was tired and hungry, was Billy Mink, and because he was tired and hungry he was cross. All about him he could hear sounds of joy, because Sister South Wind and Mistress Spring had arrived on the Green Meadows. Everybody seemed happy but himself, and, seeing everybody else happy, made Billy Mink still more cross. It is hard work to be happy with an empty stomach, very hard work, indeed. And Billy Mink's stomach was very, very empty—so empty that it seemed to him that he couldn't possibly fill it even if he should eat and eat all day long. So Billy Mink sat on the Big Rock in the Smiling Pool scowling across the Green Meadows and wondering where he could get a dinner now that he couldn't catch a fish. Suddenly a voice behind him made him jump.

"Hello, Billy Mink!" said the voice. "Isn't it a fine day?"

Billy Mink turned around. There on the bank of the Smiling Pool sat Peter Rabbit. Billy scowled more than ever.

"I don't see anything very fine about it!" he growled.

Peter Rabbit pretended not to notice how cross Billy Mink was.

“Aren’t you glad that Mistress Spring has come?” asked Peter.

“No!” snapped Billy Mink. “Why should I be?”

“Because now we’ll all have plenty to eat without having to work so hard to get it,” replied Peter.

Billy Mink made a wry face. “She hasn’t brought me anything!” he snarled. “She’s made it harder than ever for me to catch fish because she has put so much water in the Smiling Pool and Laughing Brook that the fish have all hidden in places that I can’t find, and I’m half starved.”

“I know where there is a fine, fat chicken,” said Peter Rabbit, as if he was speaking to no one in particular, and looking up at jolly, round, red Mr. Sun, who was looking down and winking at him.

“What’s that?” shouted Billy Mink.

“I said that I know where there’s a fine, fat chicken, but I guess it won’t do you any good.” replied Peter Rabbit.

“Why not?” demanded Billy Mink, his mouth beginning to water, for if there is anything that Billy Mink likes it is fine, fat chicken.

“Because I guess it is meant for someone else,” replied Peter. “I saw it lying on Jimmy Skunk’s doorstep as I came down the Crooked Little Path past his house this morning.”

“O!” said Billy Mink, pretending to be very much disappointed. “I wish someone would leave a fat chicken on my doorstep.”

“Perhaps they will some time if you wait long enough,” replied Peter Rabbit, hiding a grin behind one hand. “Well, I must hurry home for my morning nap. That was a mighty fine chicken, he added, as if talking to himself.

Billy Mink watched Peter out of sight and all the time there was a sly, eager look in his sharp little eyes. Just as soon as he was sure Peter couldn’t see him he plunged into the Smiling Pool swam across and hurried as fast as he could toward the Crooked Little Path and Jimmy Skunk’s house.

Peter Rabbit chuckled all the way home. “If Farmer Brown’s boy goes looking for that lost chicken I don’t believe he’ll find it on Jimmy Skunk’s doorstep,” he said, as he settled himself for a nap.

STORY 342. March 19, 1913

Reddy Fox Keeps Watch

Reddy Fox had never felt so impatient in all his life. He couldn’t sit still. You see, Reddy had a secret, a secret all his very own. He hadn’t even told old Granny Fox. The truth is he had taken the very greatest care that Old Granny Fox should know nothing

about it, for right down in his heart Reddy knew that she wouldn't approve of what he had done. She had forbidden him to go near Farmer Brown's henhouse, and he had disobeyed her.

You see it was this way: Jimmy Skunk had prevented Reddy catching Peter Rabbit, and Reddy had declared that he would get even with Jimmy Skunk. So Reddy had stolen up to Farmer Brown's henhouse and caught a fat chicken. Then when he was sure that Jimmy Skunk had gone to bed way down in his snug bedroom deep underground, Reddy had left the fat chicken on Jimmy Skunk's doorstep. Was it a present for Jimmy Skunk? O, my, no! You see Reddy felt sure that Farmer Brown's boy would miss that fat chicken and would go looking for it. And so Reddy had left it right in plain sight on Jimmy Skunk's doorstep so that Farmer Brown's boy would be sure to see it and think that Jimmy Skunk had taken it. That is the way Reddy Fox meant to get even.

Reddy had hurried back to the Green Forest and hidden in his secret hiding place, chuckling a wicked chuckle to think how smart he had been. He lay there a long time, and that is how it happens that he didn't see Peter Rabbit stop at Jimmy Skunk's house. But by and by Reddy's curiosity to see how his plan was working out got the better of him. He simply had to go peek. Very, very carefully he stole to the edge of the Green Forest, where he could look over to Jimmy Skunk's house. There lay the fat chicken just where he had left it. Then Reddy hurried over to the other edge of the Green Forest where he could look over to Farmer Brown's. By and by he saw Farmer Brown's boy walking around outside of the henhouse, looking this way and that. He was looking for the fat chicken. Then he went into the house and pretty soon he came with his terrible gun and whistled for Bowser the Hound. Reddy didn't wait to see any more. He knew that Farmer Brown's boy was going to hunt for the one who had stolen the fat chicken. He felt perfectly safe, for it had rained a little after he had stolen the chicken, and the rain had washed away all the scent of his tracks, so that Bowser the Hound couldn't follow them. You know the rain is one of the best friends that Reddy Fox and the other little meadow and forest people who leave scent in their tracks have.

So Reddy felt perfectly safe, and he chuckled to himself as he hurried back to have one more peep at the fat chicken on Jimmy Skunk's doorstep. "I guess I'll get even this time, Mr. Smart Jimmy Skunk!" he muttered as he hurried along. When he reached the edge of the Green Forest and looked over to Jimmy Skunk's house he had to rub his eyes three times to make sure that there was nothing the matter with them. There was no fat chicken there! No, sir, there was no fat chicken there! Reddy ground his teeth with rage. Who could have taken it? He saw Farmer Brown's boy come down the crooked little path and walk right past Jimmy Skunk's house without even looking at it. Then Reddy sneaked off home angrier than ever with Jimmy Skunk.

And all the time down in the swamp beside the laughing brook Billy Mink was filling his empty stomach with fat chicken while over in the dear old briar patch Peter Rabbit was chuckling sleepily as he thought of his bright idea of mentioning that fat chicken to Billy Mink, for Peter had known that Billy would steal it the minute he was sure no one was looking. And that was Peter's way of getting even with Jimmy Skunk for the good turn Jimmy had done him in saving him from Reddy Fox.

STORY 343. March 20, 1913

The Singers of the Smiling Pool.

Mistress Spring was making everybody happy on the Green Meadows and in the Green Forest and around the Smiling Pool. With her gentle fingers she wakened one by one all the little sleepers who had spent the long winter dreaming of warm summer days and not knowing anything at all of rough, blustering Brother North Wind or Jack Frost. As they wakened, many began to sing for joy. But the clearest, loudest singers of all lived in the Smiling Pool.

It was a long time before Peter Rabbit and Johnny Chuck knew where they lived. Every night just before going to bed, Johnny Chuck would sit on his door-step just to listen, and as he listened somehow he felt better and happier; and he always had pleasant dreams after listening to the singers of the Smiling Pool. Even after he had curled himself up for the night deep down in his snug bedroom, he could hear those sweet voices, and whenever he waked up in the night he would hear them.

Spring! Spring! Spring! Spring!
Beautiful, beautiful, beautiful Spring!
So gentle, so loving, so sweet and so fair!
O! who can be cross when there's love in the air?
Be happy! Be joyful! And join in our song
And help us to send the glad tidings along!
Spring! Spring! Spring! Spring!
Beautiful, beautiful, beautiful Spring!

When Johnny Chuck had first heard them, he had looked in all the tree-tops for the singers, but not one could he see. Then he had thought that they must be hidden in the bushes; but when he went to look, he found that the sweet singers were not there. It was very mysterious. Finally he asked Peter Rabbit if he knew who the sweet singers were and where they were. Peter didn't know, but he was willing to try to find out. Peter is always willing to try to find out about things he doesn't already know about. So Johnny Chuck and Peter Rabbit started out to find the sweet singers.

"I believe they are down in the old bulrushes around the Smiling Pool," said Peter Rabbit, as he stood listening with a hand behind one long ear.

So over to the Smiling Pool they hurried. The nearer they got, the louder became the voices singing:

"Spring! Spring! Spring! Spring!
Beautiful, beautiful, beautiful Spring!"

But look as they would, they couldn't see a single singer among the brown bulrushes. It was very strange, very strange indeed! It seemed as if the voices came right out of the Smiling Pool itself!

When Peter Rabbit made a little noise, as he hopped out on the bank where he

could look all over the Smiling Pool, the singing stopped. After he had sat perfectly still for a little while, it began again. There was no doubt about it this time; those voices came right out of the water.

Johnny Chuck stared at Peter Rabbit, and Peter stared at Johnny Chuck. Nobody was to be seen in the Smiling Pool, and yet there were those voices—oh, so many of them—coming right out of the water.

“How can birds stay under water and still sing?” asked Johnny Chuck.

“Ho, ho, ho! Ha, ha, ha!”

Peter Rabbit and Johnny Chuck whirled around, to find Jerry Muskrat peeping up at them from a hole in the bank almost under their feet.

“Ho, ho, ho! That’s the best joke this spring!” shouted Jerry Muskrat, and laughed until he had to hold his sides. “Birds under water! Ho, ho, ho!”

(The Adventures of Johnny Chuck, Chapter 3)

STORY 344. March 21, 1913

Johnny Chuck Finds Out Who The Singers Are.

Johnny Chuck couldn’t keep away from the Smiling Pool. No, sir, Johnny Chuck couldn’t keep away from the Smiling Pool. Ever since he and Peter Rabbit had gone over there looking for the sweet singers, who every night and part of the day told all who would listen how glad they were that Mistress Spring had come to the Green Meadows and the Green Forest, Johnny Chuck had had something on his mind. And this is why he couldn’t keep away from the Smiling Pool.

You see it was this way: Johnny and Peter had thought that of course the sweet singers were birds. They hadn’t dreamed of anything else. So of course they went looking for birds. When they reached the Smiling Pool, the voices came right out of the water. And because he was thinking of the birds, Johnny Chuck had spoken his thoughts right out and had exclaimed, “How can birds stay in the water and sing.” And then he couldn’t understand why Jerry Muskrat laughed fit to kill himself. You see Johnny knew that some birds, like many of the cousins of Mrs. Quack, can stay under water a long time, and so he didn’t know but some other birds might.

Jerry Muskrat was always watching for Johnny, whenever he came to the Smiling Pool, and his eyes would twinkle as he would gravely say:

“Hello, Johnny Chuck! Have you seen the birds sing under water yet?”

Johnny would smile good-naturedly and reply: “Not yet, Jerry Muskrat. Won’t you point them out to me?”

Then Jerry would reply:

Two eyes you have, bright as can be;
Perhaps someday you’ll learn to see.

Then Johnny Chuck would sit as still as ever he knew how, and watch and watch the Smiling Pool, but not a bird did he see in the water, though the singers were still there. One day a sudden thought popped into his head. Perhaps those singers were not birds at all! Why hadn't he thought of that before? Perhaps it was because he was looking so hard for birds that he hadn't seen anything else. Johnny began to look, not for anything in particular, but to see everything that he could.

Almost right away he saw some tiny little dark spots on the water. They didn't look like much of anything. They were so small that he hadn't noticed them before. One of them was quite close to him, and as Johnny Chuck looked at it, it began to look like a tiny nose, and then—why, just then, Johnny was very sure that one of those singing voices came right from that very spot!

He was so surprised that he hopped to his feet and excitedly beckoned to Jerry Muskrat. The instant he did that, the voices near him stopped singing, and the little spots on the water disappeared, leaving just the tiniest of little rings, just such tiny little rings as drops of rain falling on the Smiling Pool would make. And when that tiny spot nearest to him that looked like a tiny nose disappeared, Johnny Chuck caught just a glimpse of a little form under the water.

"Why—why-e-e! The singers are Grandfather Frog's children!" cried Johnny Chuck.

"No, they're not, but they are own cousins to them; they are the grandchildren of old Mr. Tree Toad! and they are called Hylas¹¹!" said Jerry Muskrat, laughing and rubbing his hands in great glee. "I told you that if you used your eyes, you'd learn to see."

"My, but they've got voices bigger than they are!" said Johnny Chuck, as he started home across the Green Meadows. "I'm glad I know who the singers of the Smiling Pool are, and I mustn't forget their name—Hylas. What a funny name!"

But Farmer Brown's boy, listening to their song that evening, didn't call them Hylas. He said: "Hear the peepers! Spring is surely here."

(*The Adventures of Johnny Chuck*, Chapter 4, "Johnny Chuck Finds Out Who The Sweet Singers Are").

STORY 345. March 22, 1913

Peter Rabbit Makes a Discovery.

Everybody was getting ready for summer. Yes, sir, that is just what everybody on the Green Meadows and in the Green Forest and along the Laughing Brook and around the Smiling Pool was doing. To be sure, it was only the beginning of spring, but the

11 Spring peepers are now classified in the *Pseudacris*, not the *Hyla*, genus.

spring is moving time, you know, and it is building time, and to be nicely settled in a new home by the time summer comes one must begin to plan very early. So these were busy days for everybody, including Peter Rabbit. Not that Peter was planning a new home! Oh, my, no! Peter couldn't see any use in doing that. But he was even busier than if he had been. You see if everybody moved and Peter didn't know where they moved to he couldn't go make the calls he so dearly likes to make, and if he couldn't make the calls why he couldn't gossip and that would be a terrible thing to Peter Rabbit.

So Peter was one of the busiest of all the little meadow and forest people. He hardly had time to eat. In the first place there were so many of his feathered friends returning from the south. There were new arrivals every day and Peter had taken it upon himself to welcome them back to the Green Meadows and the Green Forest. Just as he was the first one to greet Winsome the Bluebird so he was the first to hear the glad song of Little Friend the Song Sparrow and Redwing the Blackbird, and Bubbling Bob the Bobolink. Of course, they all had news for him and, of course, Peter had to hurry around and tell the news to Johnny Chuck and Jimmy Skunk and Jerry Muskrat and Unc' Billy Possum and all his other friends, most of whom were too busy with their own affairs to go hunting for news themselves. Peter had never been so happy in his life.

Now, with so much to think about Peter grew careless and heedless. He was hurrying through a dark and lonesome part of the Green Forest early one morning when he noticed a queer little ball on the ground. Then he saw three or four more. They were very curious little balls. Peter had to stop and see what they were, for you know Peter is very, very curious. They were at the bottom of a tall pine tree. Peter hopped over to the first one. That little ball was made of fur and tiny pieces of bone. Peter felt a queer feeling creeping up his backbone. Then he hopped over to another. This was of feathers and bones. Peter felt still more queer. What could they mean and where had they come from? He looked up in the pine tree and then Peter almost fainted from fright! There sat Hooty the Owl beside a rough bundle of sticks. Peter had found Hooty's home.

Peter sat perfectly still and held his breath, but his heart went pitapat, pitapat with fright. Of course, sitting perfectly still was just the best thing he could have done. Hooty didn't move. Neither did Peter. After a while Peter stopped shaking inside. If Hooty had seen him Hooty would have tried to catch him before this. It must be—yes, it was that Hooty was asleep. Peter held his breath and tiptoed away two or three steps. Hooty didn't move. Peter tried it again. Still Hooty didn't move. Then Peter crept a little farther. Hooty still slept. At last Peter was far enough to run. And how he did run! No frightened rabbit ever ran faster!

Peter was so frightened that he kept watching behind him instead of looking to see where he was going. The result was he almost ran into Jimmy Skunk, who was out looking for beetles for his breakfast.

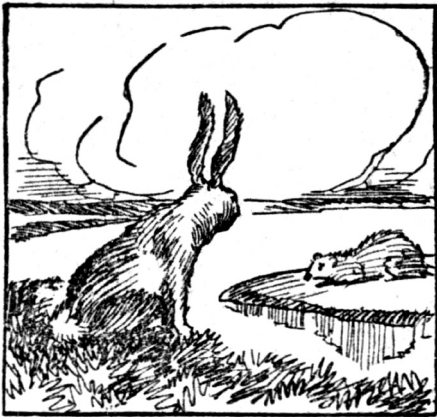
"What's the matter with you now, Peter Rabbit?" asked Jimmy Skunk.

Peter shivered and his teeth chattered so with fright that he couldn't speak. He just pointed back in the direction from which he had come and then started on again for the

Illustrations. March 17 to March 22, 1913.



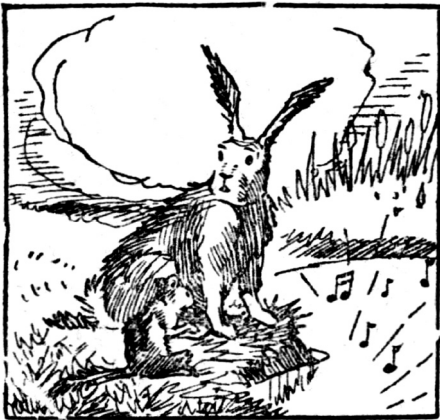
340. Peter Rabbit is Troubled



341. Billy Mink Receives a Caller



342. Reddy Fox Keeps Watch



343. The Singers of the Smiling Pool



344. Johnny Chuck Finds Out Who the Singers Are



345. Peter Rabbit Makes a Discovery

old briar patch, liperty-liperty-lip!

“Peter Rabbit’s afraid of his own shadow,” grumbled Jimmy Skunk, who isn’t afraid of much of anything. “Now, I wonder what has frightened him this time. I believe I’ll just have to see.”

So Jimmy Skunk started off in the direction from which Peter had just come.

(The Bedtime Story Calendar, # 12, “Getting Ready for Summer”)

STORY 346. March 24, 1913

Hooty the Owl’s Castle.

Jimmy Skunk picked his way through the Green Forest talking to himself, which is a way he has. He had met Peter Rabbit running and looking as if a ghost was at his heels. When he had asked Peter what the matter was Peter’s teeth had chattered so with fright that he couldn’t speak. He had just pointed in the direction from which he had come and then hurried on. Now Jimmy Skunk isn’t afraid of much of anything, and as he didn’t have anything better to do, he took it into his head that he would go see what had frightened Peter Rabbit so.

Mr. Fraidy runs away
From a shadow every day;
Shakes and shivers so with fright
He cannot even sleep at night.

“What’s that yo’ am saying, Brer Skunk?”

Jimmy looked up at Unc’ Billy Possum, who was looking down from his doorway in the big hollow tree.

“Come on, Unc’ Billy, let’s see what has frightened Peter Rabbit so,” replied Jimmy Skunk, and then told Unc’ Billy all about his meeting with Peter. Now, Unc’ Billy Possum is more timid than Jimmy Skunk, but he isn’t afraid until he sees something to be afraid of, so he climbed down from the big hollow tree and joined Jimmy. Together they picked their way through the Green Forest to that dark, lonesome corner of it from which Peter had come, and all the time they kept their sharp eyes open to see what had frightened Peter Rabbit.

By and by they reached the foot of the tall pine tree where Peter had seen the queer little balls of fur and feathers and bones. Unc’ Billy saw them right away, and he didn’t have to look twice to know what they were. He had seen little balls like that before. He grabbed Jimmy Skunk by the tail and put one hand on his lips as a sign to keep still. Then he backed away and drew Jimmy after him.

“What’s the matter?” whispered Jimmy Skunk.

Unc’ Billy said nothing, but led Jimmy to a pile of brush, under which he crawled, Jimmy following him. Then peeping out from this safe retreat, Unc’ Billy pointed to the top of the tall pine tree. There sat Hooty the Owl, and close to him was a bundle of

sticks made into a rough sort of platform. Jimmy Skunk looked puzzled.

“That’s the old home of Redtail the Hawk; he gave it up two years ago. What’s Hooty doing there?” muttered Jimmy.

“It’s his castle,” whispered Unc’ Billy.

“What’s that you said?” whispered Jimmy Skunk.

“His castle, his home, the place where he lives. Don’t yo’ see those li’l’ balls of fur and feathers down there on the ground? After Hooty has made a meal he rolls the furs and feathers and bones up into little balls and spits them out because they are no good for food, yo’ know.” Unc’ Billy suddenly grabbed Jimmy Skunk in great excitement. “What’s that on that old bundle of sticks?” he whispered.

Jimmy peeped out carefully. Then his eyes opened wider than ever. “It’s—it’s—” He paused as if he didn’t know what to say.

“It’s a Mrs. Hooty! Hooty the Owl has married,” Unc’ Billy finished for him. “Ah spects this place isn’t no way safe fo’ honest folks any mo’. Ah must hurry home and warn mah fam’ly to keep away from this part of the Green Forest.”

Unc’ Billy and Jimmy Skunk tiptoed away until they felt sure that they were far enough not to disturb Hooty the Owl or Mrs. Hooty. Then for once in their lives they hurried. You see, while Jimmy Skunk fears very few he does have a very great deal of respect for the long claws of Hooty the Owl, and he had no mind to wake him up.

“I understand now why Peter Rabbit was so frightened,” said Jimmy Skunk as they hurried along, “and I don’t know as I blame him.”

And from that day on all the little meadow people and forest folk excepting Reddy Fox and Prickly Porky the Porcupine, who were not afraid, took the greatest care to keep away from that corner of the Green Forest where Hooty had his castle.

(The Bedtime Story Calendar, # 13)

STORY 347. March 25, 1913

Johnny Chuck is Discontented.

Johnny Chuck was unhappy. Here it was the glad springtime, when everybody is supposed to be the very happiest, and Johnny Chuck was unhappy. Why was he unhappy? Well, he hardly knew himself. He had slept comfortably all the long winter. He had awakened very, very hungry, but now he had plenty to eat. All about him the birds were singing or busily at work building new homes. And still Johnny Chuck felt unhappy. It was dreadful to feel this way and not have any good reason for it.

One bright morning Johnny Chuck sat on his door-step watching Drummer the Woodpecker building a new home in the old apple tree. Drummer’s red head flew back and forth, back and forth, and his sharp bill cut out tiny bits of wood. It was slow work.

It was hard work. But Drummer seemed happy, very happy indeed. It was watching Drummer that started Johnny Chuck to thinking about his own home. He had always thought it a very nice home. He had built it just as he wanted it. From the doorstep he could look in all directions over the Green Meadows. It had a front door and a hidden back door. Yes, it was a very nice home indeed.

But now, all of a sudden, Johnny Chuck became dissatisfied with his home. It was too near the Lone Little Path. Too many people knew where it was. It wasn't big enough. The front door ought to face the other way. Dear me, what a surprising lot of faults a discontented heart can find with things that have always been just right! It was so with Johnny Chuck. That house in which he had spent so many happy days, which had protected him from all harm, of which he had been so proud when he first built it, was now the meanest house in the world. If other people had new houses, why shouldn't he? The more he thought about it, the more dissatisfied and discontented he became and of course the more unhappy. You know one cannot be dissatisfied and discontented and happy at the same time.

Now dissatisfied and discontented people are not at all pleasant to have around. Johnny Chuck had always been one of the best natured of all the little meadow people, and everybody liked him. So Jimmy Skunk didn't know quite what to make of it, when he came down the Lone Little Path and found Johnny Chuck so out of sorts that he wouldn't even answer when spoken to.

Jimmy Skunk was feeling very good-natured himself. He had just had a fine breakfast of fat beetles and he was at peace with all the world. So he sat down beside Johnny Chuck and began to talk, just as if Johnny Chuck was his usual good-natured self.

"It's a fine day," said Jimmy Skunk.

Johnny Chuck just sniffed. "You're looking very well," said Jimmy.

Johnny just scowled.

"I think you've got the best place on the Green Meadows for a house," said Jimmy, pretending to admire the view.

Johnny scowled harder than ever. "And such a splendid house!" said Jimmy. "I wish I had one like it."

"I'm glad you like it! You can have the old thing!" snapped Johnny Chuck.

"What's that?" demanded Jimmy Skunk, opening his eyes very wide.

"I said that you can have it. I'm going to move," replied Johnny Chuck.

Now he really hadn't thought of moving until that very minute. And he didn't know why he had said it. But he had said it, and because he is an obstinate little fellow he stuck to it.

"When can I move in?" asked Jimmy Skunk, his eyes twinkling.

"Right away, if you want to," replied Johnny Chuck, and swaggered off down

the Lone Little Path, leaving Jimmy Skunk to stare after him as if he thought Johnny Chuck had suddenly gone crazy, as indeed he had.

(*The Adventures of Johnny Chuck*, Chapter 5, “Johnny Chuck Becomes Dissatisfied”)

STORY 348. March 26, 1913

Johnny Chuck Turns Tramp

Johnny Chuck had turned tramp. Yes, sir, Johnny Chuck had turned tramp. It was a funny thing to do, but he had done it. He didn’t know why he had done it, excepting that he had become dissatisfied and discontented and unhappy in his old home. And then, almost without thinking what he was doing, he had told Jimmy Skunk that he could have the house he had worked so hard to build the summer before and of which he had been so proud. Then Johnny Chuck had swaggered away down the Lone Little Path without once looking back at the home he was leaving.

Where was he going? Well, to tell the truth, Johnny didn’t know. He was going to see the world, and perhaps when he had seen the world, he would build him a new house. So as long as he was in sight of Jimmy Skunk, he swaggered along quite as if he was used to traveling about, without any snug house to go to at night. But right down in his heart Johnny Chuck didn’t feel half so bold as he pretended to.

You see, not since he was a little Chuck and had run away from old Mother Chuck with Peter Rabbit¹², had he ever been very far from his own doorstep. He had always been content to grow fat and roly-poly right near his own home, and listen to the tales of the great world from Jimmy Skunk and Peter Rabbit and Bobby Coon and Unc’ Billy Possum, all of whom are great travelers.

But now, here he was, actually setting forth, and without a home to come back to. You see, he had made up his mind that no matter what happened, he wouldn’t come back, after having given his house to Jimmy Skunk.

When he had reached a place where he thought Jimmy Skunk couldn’t see him, Johnny Chuck turned and looked back, and a queer little feeling seemed to make a lump that filled his throat and choked him. The fact is, Johnny Chuck already began to feel homesick. But he swallowed very hard and tried to make himself think that he was having a splendid time. He stopped looking back and started on, and as he tramped along, he tried to sing a song he had once heard Jimmy Skunk sing:

The world may stretch full far and wide,
What matters that to me?
I’ll tramp it up; I’ll tramp it down;
For I am bold and free.

It was a very brave little song, but Johnny Chuck didn’t feel half so brave and bold as he tried to think he did. Already he was beginning to wonder where he should spend the night. Then he thought of old Whitetail the Marsh Hawk, who had given him such

12 STORY 2, 1912.

a fright and had so nearly caught him when he was a little fellow¹³. The thought made him look around hastily, and there was old Whitetail himself, sailing back and forth hungrily just ahead of him. A great fear took possession of Johnny Chuck, and he made himself as flat as possible in the grass, for there was no place to hide. He made up his mind that anyway he would fight.

Nearer and nearer came old Whitetail. Finally he passed right over Johnny Chuck. But he didn't offer to touch him. Indeed, it seemed to Johnny that old Whitetail actually grinned and winked at him. And right then all his fear left him.

"Pooh!" said Johnny Chuck scornfully. "Who's afraid of him!" He suddenly realized that he was no longer a helpless little Chuck who couldn't take care of himself, but big and strong, with sharp teeth with which his old enemy had no mind to make a closer acquaintance, when there were mice and snakes to be caught without fighting. So he puffed out his chest and went on, and actually began to enjoy himself, and almost wished for a chance to show how big and strong he was.

(The Adventures of Johnny Chuck, Chapter 6)

STORY 349. March 27, 1913

Johnny Chuck's First Adventure.

After old Whitetail the Marsh Hawk passed Johnny Chuck without offering to touch him, Johnny began to feel very brave and bold and important. He strutted and swaggered along as much as his short legs would let him. He held his head very high. Already he felt that he had almost had an adventure and he longed for a real one. He forgot the terrible lonesome feeling of a little while before. He forgot that he had given away the only home he had. He didn't know just why, but right down deep inside he had a sudden feeling that he really didn't care a thing about that old home. In fact, he felt as if he wouldn't care if he never had another home. Yes, sir, that is the way that Johnny Chuck felt. Do you know why? Just because he had just begun to realize how big and strong he really was.

Now it is a splendid thing to feel big and strong and brave, a very splendid thing! But it is a bad thing to let that feeling turn to pride, foolish pride. Of course old Whitetail hadn't really been afraid of Johnny Chuck. He had simply passed Johnny with a wink, because there was plenty to eat without the trouble of fighting, and Whitetail doesn't fight just for the fun of it.

But foolish Johnny Chuck really thought that old Whitetail was afraid of him. The more he thought about it, the more tickled he felt and the more puffed up he felt. He began to talk to himself and to brag. Yes, sir, Johnny Chuck began to brag:

I'm not afraid of any one;
They're all afraid of me!
I only have to show my teeth
To make them turn and flee.

13 STORY 3, 1912.

“Pooh!” said a voice. “Pooh! It would take two like you to make me run away!”

Johnny Chuck gave a startled jump. There was a strange Chuck glaring at him from behind a little bunch of grass. He was a big, gray old Chuck whom Johnny never had seen on the Green Meadows before, and he didn’t look the least bit afraid. No, sir, he didn’t look the teeniest, weeniest bit afraid! Somehow, Johnny Chuck didn’t feel half so big and strong and brave as he had a few minutes before. But it wouldn’t do to let this stranger know it. Of course not! So, though he felt very small inside, Johnny made all his hair bristle up and tried to look very fierce.

“Who are you and what are you doing on my Green Meadows?” he demanded.

“Your Green Meadows! Your Green Meadows! Ho, ho, ho! Your Green Meadows!” The stranger laughed an unpleasant laugh. “How long since you owned the Green Meadows? I have just come down on to them from the Old Pasture, and I like the looks of them so well that I think I will stay. So run along, little boaster! There isn’t room for both of us here, and the sooner you trot along the better.” The stranger suddenly showed all his teeth and gritted them unpleasantly.

Now when Johnny Chuck heard this, great anger filled his heart. A stranger had ordered him to leave the Green Meadows where he had been born and always lived! He could hardly believe his own ears. He, Johnny Chuck, would show this stranger who was master here.

With a squeal of rage, Johnny sprang at the gray old Chuck. Then began such a fight as the Merry Little Breezes of Old Mother West Wind had never seen before. They danced around excitedly and cried, “How dreadful!” and hoped that Johnny Chuck would win, for you know they loved him very much.

Over and over the two little fighters rolled, biting and scratching and tearing and growling and snarling. Jolly, round, red Mr. Sun hid his face behind a cloud, so as not to see such a dreadful sight. The stranger had been in many fights and he was very crafty. For a while Johnny felt that he was getting the worst of it, and he began to wonder if he really would have to leave the Green Meadows. The very thought filled him with new rage and he fought harder than ever.

Now the stranger was old and his teeth were worn, while Johnny was young and his teeth were very sharp. After a long, long time, Johnny felt the stranger growing weaker. Johnny fought still harder. At last the stranger cried “Enough!” and when he could break away, started back towards the Old Pasture. Johnny Chuck had won.

(The Adventures of Johnny Chuck, Chapter 7)

STORY 350. March 28, 1913

Johnny Chuck Has Another Adventure.

Johnny Chuck lay stretched out on the cool, soft grass of the Green Meadows, panting for breath. He was very tired and very sore. His face was scratched and bitten. His clothes were torn, and he smarted dreadfully in a dozen places. But still Johnny

Chuck was happy. When he raised his head to look, he could see a gray old Chuck limping off towards the Old Pasture. Once in a while the gray old Chuck would turn his head and show his teeth, but he kept right on towards the Old Pasture. Johnny Chuck smiled.

You see Johnny and the old gray Chuck had had a dreadful fight to see who should leave the Green Meadows and Johnny had won. It had been a great fight, and more than once Johnny Chuck had thought that he should have to give up. He thought of this now, and then he thought with shame of how he had bragged and boasted just before the fight. What if he had lost? He resolved that he would never again brag or boast. But he also made up his mind that if anyone should pick a quarrel with him, he would show that he wasn't afraid.

It was getting late in the afternoon when Johnny finally felt rested enough to go on. He had got to find a place to spend the night. You see, Johnny Chuck had been discontented and had given his house to Jimmy Skunk and had started out to see the world. He hobbled along, for he was very stiff and sore, until he came to the edge of the Green Meadows, where they meet the Green Forest.

Jolly, round, red Mr. Sun was almost ready to go down to his bed behind the Purple Hills. Shadows were already beginning to creep through the Green Forest. Somehow they gave Johnny Chuck that same lonesome feeling that he had had when he first left his old home. You see he had always lived out in the Green Meadows and somehow he was afraid of the Green Forest in the night.

So, instead of going into the Green Forest, he wandered along the edge of it, looking for a place in which to spend the night. At last he came to a hollow log lying just out on the edge of the Green Meadows. Very carefully Johnny Chuck examined it, to be sure that no one else was using it.

"It's just the place I'm looking for," he said aloud.

Just then there was a sharp hiss, a very fierce hiss. Johnny Chuck felt the hair on his neck rise as it always did when he heard that hiss, and he wasn't at all surprised, when he turned his head, to find Mr. Blacksnake close by. Mr. Blacksnake glided swiftly up to the old log and coiled himself in front of the opening. Then he raised his head and ran out his tongue in the most impudent way.

"Run along, Johnny Chuck! I've decided to sleep here myself tonight!" he said sharply.

Now when Johnny Chuck was a very little fellow, he had been in great fear of Mr. Blacksnake, as he had had reason to be. And because he didn't know any better, he had been afraid ever since. Mr. Blacksnake knew this and so now he looked as ugly as he knew how. But you see he didn't know about the great fight that Johnny Chuck had just won.

Now to win an honest fight always makes one feel very strong and very sure of oneself. Johnny looked at Mr. Blacksnake and saw that Mr. Blacksnake didn't look half as big as Johnny had always thought he did. He made up his mind that as he had found

the old log first, he had the best right to it.

"I found it first and I'm going to keep it!" snapped Johnny Chuck, and with every hair on end and gritting his teeth, he walked straight towards Mr. Blacksnake.

Now Mr. Blacksnake is a great bluffer, while at heart he is really a coward. With a fierce hiss he rushed right at Johnny Chuck, expecting to see him turn tail and run. But Johnny stood his ground and showed all his sharp teeth. Instead of attacking Johnny, Mr. Blacksnake glided past him and sneaked away through the grass.

Johnny Chuck chuckled as he crept into the hollow log.

"Only a coward runs away without fighting," he murmured sleepily.

(The Adventures of Johnny Chuck, Chapter 8)

STORY 351. March 29, 1913

Another Strange Chuck.

Johnny Chuck awoke just as jolly, round, red Mr. Sun pulled his own nightcap off. At first Johnny couldn't think where he was. He blinked and blinked. Then he rolled over. "Ouch!" cried Johnny Chuck. You see he was so stiff and sore from his great fight the day before, that it hurt to roll over. But when he felt the smart of those wounds, he remembered where he was. He was in the old hollow log that he had found on the edge of the Green Meadows just before dark. It was the first time that Johnny had ever slept anywhere, excepting underground, and as he lay blinking his eyes, it seemed very strange and rather nice, too.

"Well, well, well! What are you doing here?" cried a sharp voice.

Johnny Chuck looked towards the open end of the old log. There, peeping in, was a little face as sharp as the voice.

"Hello, Chatterer!" cried Johnny.

"I say, what are you doing here?" persisted Chatterer the Red Squirrel, for it was he.

"Just waking up," replied Johnny, with a grin.

"It's time," replied Chatterer. "But that isn't telling me what you are doing so far from home."

"I haven't any home," said Johnny, his face growing just a wee bit wistful.

"You haven't any home!" Chatterer's voice sounded as if he didn't think he had heard aright. "What have you done with it?"

"Given it to Jimmy Skunk," replied Johnny Chuck.

Now Chatterer never gives anything to anybody, and how anyone could give away his home was more than he could understand. He stared at Johnny as if he thought Johnny had gone crazy. Finally, he found his tongue. "I don't believe it!" he snapped.

“If Jimmy Skunk has got your old home, it’s because he put you out of it.”

“No such thing! I’d like to see Jimmy Skunk or anybody else put me out of my home!” Johnny Chuck spoke scornfully. “I gave it to him because I didn’t want it any longer. I’m going to see the world, and then I’m going to build me a new home. Everybody else seems to be building new homes this spring; why shouldn’t I?”

“I’m not!” retorted Chatterer. “I know enough to know when I am well off.

Who has a discontented heart
Is sure to play a sorry part.

Johnny Chuck crawled out of the old log and stretched himself somewhat painfully. “That may be, but there are different kinds of discontent.

Who never looks for better things
Will live his life in little rings.

Well, I must be moving along, if I am to see the world.”

So Johnny Chuck bade Chatterer good-by and started on. It was very delightful to wander over the Green Meadows on such a beautiful spring morning. The violets and the wind-flowers nodded to him, and the dandelions smiled up at him. Johnny almost forgot his torn clothes and the bites and scratches of his great fight with the gray old Chuck the day before. It was fun to just go where he pleased and not have a care in the world.

He was thinking of this, as he sat up to look over the Green Meadows. His heart gave a great throb. What was that over near the lone elm tree? It was—yes, it certainly was another Chuck! Could it be the old gray Chuck come back for another fight? A great anger filled the heart of Johnny Chuck, and he whistled sharply. The strange Chuck didn’t answer. Johnny ground his teeth and started for the lone elm tree. He would show this other Chuck who was master of the Green Meadows.

(The Adventures of Johnny Chuck, Chapter 9)

STORY 352. March 31, 1913

Why Johnny Chuck Didn’t Fight.

Anger is an awful thing;
It never stops to reason.
It boils right over all at once,
No matter what the season.

It was so with Johnny Chuck. The minute he caught sight of the strange chuck over by the lone elm-tree, anger filled his heart and fairly boiled over, until he was in a terrible rage. Of course it was foolish, very foolish indeed. The strange chuck hadn’t said or done anything to make Johnny Chuck angry, not the least thing in the world, excepting to come down on to the Green Meadows. Now the Green Meadows are very broad, and there is room for many chucks. It was pure selfishness on the part of Johnny

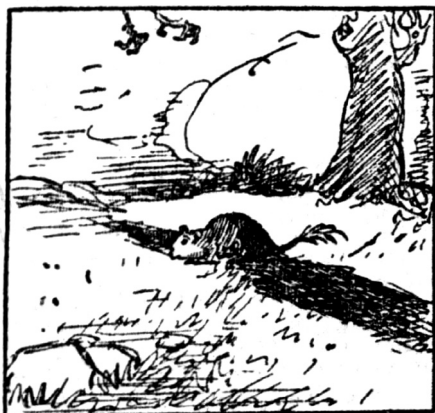
Illustrations. March 24 to March 29, 1913.



346. Making a Home in a Queer Place



347. Johnny Chuck is Discontented



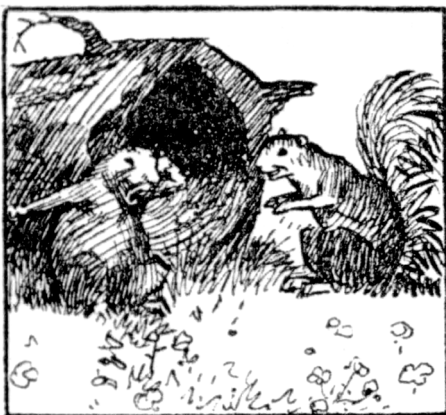
348. Johnny Chuck Turns Tramp



349. Johnny Chuck's First Adventure



350. Johnny Chuck Has Another Adventure



351. Another Strange Chuck

Chuck to want to drive away every other chuck.

But anger never stops to reason. It didn't now. Johnny Chuck hurried as fast as his short legs could take him towards the lone elm tree, and in his mind was just one thought—to drive that strange chuck off the Green Meadows and to punish him so that he never, never would dare even think of coming back. So great was Johnny's anger that every hair stood on end, and as he ran he chattered and scolded.

"I'll fix him! These are my Green Meadows, and no one else has any business here unless I say so! I'll fix him! I'll fix him!"

Then Johnny would grind his teeth, and in his eyes was the ugliest look. He wasn't nice to see, not a bit nice. The Merry Little Breezes of Old Mother West Wind didn't know what to make of him. Could this be the Johnny Chuck they had known so long, the good-natured, happy Johnny Chuck whom everybody loved? They drew away from him, for they didn't want anything to do with any one in such a frightful temper. But Johnny Chuck didn't even notice, and if he had he wouldn't have cared. That is the trouble with anger. It crowds out everything else, when it once fills the heart.

When Johnny had first seen the stranger, he had thought right away that it was the old gray Chuck with whom he had had such a terrible fight the day before and whom he whipped. Perhaps that was one reason for Johnny Chuck's terrible anger now, for the old gray Chuck had tried to drive Johnny Chuck off the Green Meadows.

But when he had to stop for breath and sat up to look again, he saw that it wasn't the old gray Chuck at all. It was a younger Chuck and much smaller than the old gray Chuck. It was smaller than Johnny himself.

"He'll be all the easier to whip," muttered Johnny, as he started on again, never once thinking of how unfair it would be to fight with one smaller than himself. That was because he was so angry. Anger never is fair.

Pretty soon he reached the lone elm tree. The stranger wasn't to be seen! No, sir, the stranger wasn't anywhere in sight. Johnny Chuck sat up and looked this way and looked that way, but nowhere could he see the stranger.

"Pooh!" said Johnny Chuck, "He's afraid to fight! He's a coward. But he can't get away from me so easily. He's hiding, and I'll find him and then—" Johnny didn't finish, but he ground his teeth, and it wasn't a pleasant sound to hear.

So Johnny Chuck hunted for the stranger, and the longer he hunted the angrier he grew. Somehow the stranger managed to keep out of his sight. He was almost ready to give up, when he almost stumbled over the stranger, hiding in a little clump of bushes. And then a funny thing happened. What do you think it was?

Why, all the anger left Johnny Chuck. His hair no longer stood on end. He didn't know why, but all of a sudden he felt foolish, very foolish indeed.

"Who are you?" he demanded gruffly.

“I—I’m Polly Chuck,” replied the stranger, in a small, timid voice.

(*The Adventures of Johnny Chuck*, Chapter 10)

STORY 353. April 1, 1913

The Greatest Thing in the World

Johnny Chuck had begun to think about his clothes. Yes, sir, he spent a whole lot of time thinking about how he looked and wishing that he had a handsomer coat. For the first time in all his life he began to envy Reddy Fox, because of the beautiful red coat of which Reddy is so proud. It seemed to Johnny that his own coat was so plain and so dull that no one would look at it twice. Besides, it was torn now, because of the great fight Johnny had had with the old gray Chuck who came down from the Old Pasture. Johnny smoothed it down and brushed it carefully and tried to make himself look as spic and span as he knew how.

“Oh, dear!” he sighed. “I don’t see why Old Mother Nature didn’t give me as handsome a coat as she did Reddy Fox. And there are Jimmy Skunk and Happy Jack the Gray Squirrel and—and—why, almost everyone has a handsomer coat than I have!”

Now this wasn’t at all like Johnny Chuck. First he had been discontented with his house and had given it to Jimmy Skunk. Now he was discontented with his clothes. What was coming over Johnny Chuck? He really didn’t know himself. At least, he wouldn’t have admitted that he knew. But right down deep in his heart was a great desire—the desire to have Polly Chuck admire him. Yes, sir, that is what it was! And it seemed to him that she would admire him a great deal more if he wore fine clothes. You see, he hadn’t learned yet what Peter Rabbit had learned a long time ago, which is that

Fine clothes but catch the passing eye;
Fine deeds win love from low and high.

So Johnny Chuck wished and wished that he had a handsome suit, but as he didn’t, and no amount of wishing would bring him one, he just made the one he did have look as good as he could, and then went in search of Polly Chuck.

Sometimes she would not notice him at all. Sometimes he would find her shyly peeping at him from behind a clump of grass. Then Johnny Chuck would try to make himself look very important, and would strut about as if he really did own the Green Meadows.

Sometimes she would hide from him, and when he found her she would run away. Other times she would be just as nice to him as she could be, and they would have a jolly time hunting for sweet clover and other nice things to eat. Then Johnny Chuck’s heart would swell until it seemed to him that it would fairly burst with happiness.

Instead of wanting to drive Polly Chuck away from the Green Meadows, as he had the old gray Chuck, Johnny began to worry for fear that Polly Chuck might not stay on the Green Meadows. Whenever he thought of that, his heart would sink way, way down, and he would hurry to look for her and make sure that she was still there.

When he was beside her, he felt very big and strong and brave and longed for a chance to show her how brave he was. She was such a timid little thing herself that the least little thing frightened her, and Johnny Chuck was glad that this was so, for it gave him a chance to protect her.

When he wasn't with her, he spent his time looking for new patches of sweet clover to take her to. At first she wouldn't go without a great deal of coaxing, but after a while he didn't have to coax at all. She seemed to delight to be with him as much as he did to be with her.

So Johnny Chuck grew happier and happier. He was happier than he had ever been in all his life before. You see Johnny Chuck had found the greatest thing in the world. Do you know what it is? It is called love.

(The Adventures of Johnny Chuck, Chapter 11)

STORY 354. April 2, 1913

Johnny Chuck Proves His Love

These spring days were beautiful days on the Green Meadows. It seemed to Johnny Chuck that the Green Meadows never had been so lovely or the songs of the birds so sweet. He had forgotten all about his old friends, Jimmy Skunk and Peter Rabbit and the other little meadow people.

You see, he couldn't think of anybody but Polly Chuck, and he didn't want to be with anybody but Polly Chuck. He had even forgotten that he had started out to see world. He didn't care anything more about the world. All he wanted was to be where Polly Chuck was. Then he was perfectly happy. That was because Johnny Chuck had found the greatest thing in the world, which is love. But Johnny still had one great wish, the wish that he might show Polly Chuck just how brave and strong he was and how well he could take care of her.

One morning they were feasting in a patch of sweet clover over near an old stone wall. It was the same stone wall in which Johnny Chuck had escaped from old Whitetail the Marsh Hawk, when Johnny was a very little fellow¹⁴.

Suddenly Polly gave a little scream of fright. Johnny Chuck looked up to see a dog almost upon her. Johnny's first thought was to run to the old stone wall. He was nearer to it than Polly was. Then he saw that that dreadful dog would catch Polly before she could reach the stone wall.

A great rage filled Johnny's heart, just as it had when he had fought the old gray Chuck. Every hair stood on end, not with fear, but with anger, and he sprang in front of Polly.

"Run, Polly, run!" he cried, and Polly ran.

But Johnny didn't run. Oh, my, no! Johnny didn't run. He drew himself together ready to spring. He showed all his sharp teeth and ground them savagely. Little sparks

¹⁴ STORY 3, 1912.

of fire seemed to snap out of his eyes. There was no sign of fear in Johnny Chuck then, not the least little bit. Just in front of him the dog stopped and barked. He was a little dog, a young and foolish dog, and he was terribly excited. He barked until he almost lost his breath. He didn't like the looks of Johnny Chuck's sharp teeth. So he circled around Johnny, trying to get behind him. But Johnny turned as the dog circled, and always the little dog found those sharp teeth directly in front of him. He barked and barked, until it seemed as if he would bark his head off.

Finally the little dog, who was young and foolish, grew tired of just dancing around and barking. "Pooh!" said he to himself. "He's nothing but a Chuck!" Then he stopped barking and sprang straight at Johnny with an ugly growl.

Johnny Chuck was ready for him and he was quicker than the little dog. His sharp teeth closed on one of the little dog's ears, and he held on while with his stout claws he scratched and tore.

The little dog, who was young and foolish and hadn't yet learned how to fight, couldn't get hold of Johnny Chuck anywhere. Then he tried to shake Johnny Chuck off, but he couldn't, because Johnny held on to that ear with his sharp teeth.

"Kiyi-yi-yi-yi!" yelled the little dog, for those teeth hurt dreadfully. "Kiyi-yi-yi-yi!"

Over and over they rolled and tumbled and rolled, the little dog trying to get away, and Johnny Chuck holding on to the little dog's ear. Finally Johnny had to let go to get his breath. The little dog sprang to his feet and started for home across the Green Meadows as fast as he could run.

Johnny Chuck shook himself and grinned, as he heard the little dog's "Kiyi-yi-yi" grow fainter and fainter. "I'm glad it wasn't Bowser the Hound," muttered Johnny Chuck, as he started towards the old stone wall. There he found Polly Chuck peeping out at him, and all of a tremble with fright.

"My, how brave you are!" said Polly Chuck.

"Pooh, that's nothing!" replied Johnny Chuck.

(The Adventures of Johnny Chuck, Chapter 12)

STORY 355. April 3, 1913

Polly and Johnny Chuck Go House Hunting.

Johnny Chuck was happy. Yes, sir, Johnny Chuck was happy—so happy that he felt like doing foolish things. You see Johnny Chuck loved Polly Chuck and he knew now that Polly Chuck loved him. He had known it ever since he had fought with the foolish little dog who had dared to frighten Polly Chuck.

After the fight was over, and the little dog had been sent home kiyi-yi-ing, Polly Chuck had crept out of the old stone wall where she had been hiding and snuggled up beside Johnny Chuck and looked at him as if she thought him the most wonderful

Chuck in all the world, as, indeed, she did. And Johnny had felt his heart swell and swell with happiness until it almost choked him.

So now once more Johnny Chuck began to think of a new home. He had forgotten all about seeing the world. All he wanted now was a new house, built just so, with a front door and a hidden back door, and big enough for two, for no more would Johnny Chuck live alone. So, with shy little Polly Chuck by his side, he began to search for a place to make a new home.

The more he thought about it, the more Johnny wanted to build his house over by the lone elm tree where he had first seen Polly Chuck. It was a splendid place. From it you could see a great way in every direction. It would be shady on hot summer days. It was near a great big patch of sweet clover. It seemed to Johnny Chuck that it was the best place on all the Green Meadows. He whispered as much to Polly Chuck. She turned up her nose.

“It’s too low!” said she.

“Oh!” replied Johnny, and looked puzzled, for really it was one of the highest places on the Green Meadows.

“Yes,” said Polly, in a brisk, decided way, “it’s altogether too low. Probably it is wet.”

“Oh!” said Johnny once more. Of course he knew that it wasn’t wet, but if Polly didn’t want to live there, he wouldn’t say a word. Of course not.

“Now there’s a place right over there,” continued Polly. “I think we’ll build our house right there.”

Johnny opened his mouth to say something, but he closed it again without speaking and meekly trotted after Polly Chuck to the place she had picked out. It was in a little hollow. Johnny knew before he began to dig that the ground was damp, almost wet. But if Polly wanted to live there she should, and Johnny began to dig. By and by he stopped to rest. Where was Polly? He looked this way and that way anxiously. Just as he was getting ready to go hunt for her, she came hurrying back.

“I’ve found a perfectly lovely place for our new home!” she cried.

Johnny looked ruefully at the hole he had worked so hard to dig; then he brushed the dirt from his clothes and followed her. This time Johnny had no fault to find with the ground. It was high and dry. But Polly had chosen a spot close to a road that wound down across the Green Meadows. Johnny shook his head doubtfully, but he began to dig. This time, however, he kept one eye on Polly Chuck, and the minute he found that she was wandering off, he stopped digging and chuckled as he watched her. It wasn’t long before back she came in great excitement. She had found a better place!

So they wandered over the Green Meadows, Polly leading the way. Johnny had learned by this time to waste no time digging. And he had made up his mind to one

thing. What do you think it was? It was this: He would follow Polly until she found a place to suit him, but when she did find such a place she shouldn't have a chance to change her mind again.

(The Adventures of Johnny Chuck, Chapter 13)

STORY 356. April 4, 1913

A New Home at Last

Home, no matter where it be,
Or it be big or small,
Is just the one place in the world
That dearest is of all.

Johnny Chuck was thinking of this as he worked with might and main. It was a new house that he was building, but already he felt that it was home, and every time he thought of it he felt a queer little tugging at his heart. You see, while it was his home, it was Polly Chuck's home, too, and that made it doubly dear to Johnny Chuck, even before it was finished.

And where do you think Johnny was building his new home? It was clear way over on the edge of Farmer Brown's old orchard! Yes, sir, after all the fuss Johnny Chuck had made over any other Chuck living on the Green Meadows, and after driving the old gray Chuck back to the Old Pasture, Johnny Chuck had left the Green Meadows himself!

It wasn't of his own accord that Johnny Chuck had left the Green Meadows. No, indeed! He loved them too well for that. But he loved Polly Chuck more, and although he had grumbled a little, he had followed her up to the old orchard, and now they were going to stay there. Sometimes Johnny shivered when he thought how near were Farmer Brown and Farmer Brown's boy and Bowser the Hound.

He had never been so far from his old home on the Green Meadows before, and it was all very strange up here. It was very lovely, too. Besides, it was in this very old orchard that Polly Chuck had been born, and she knew every part of it. Johnny felt better when he found that out. So he set to work to build a home, and this time he meant business. Polly Chuck could change her mind as many times as she pleased, but this was going to be their home and this was where they were going to live.

Now Johnny Chuck had grown wise in the ways of the world since he first ran away from the home where he was born. Twice since then he had built a new home, and now this would be better than either of the others. He paid no heed to Polly, when she pouted because he did not dig where she wanted him to. He went from tree to tree, big old apple trees they were, and at the very last tree, way down in a corner near a tumbled-down stone wall, he found what he wanted

Two spreading roots gave him a chance to dig between them. Polly watched him get ready for work and she pouted some more.

“It would be a lot nicer out in that grassy place, and a lot easier to dig,” said she.

Johnny Chuck smiled and made the dirt fly. “It certainly would be easier to dig,” said he, when he stopped for breath, “easier for me and easier for Bowser the Hound or for old Granny Fox, if either wanted to dig us out. Now, these old roots are just far enough apart for us to go in and out. They make a beautiful doorway. But Bowser the Hound cannot get through if he tries, and he can’t make our doorway any larger. Don’t you see how safe it is?”

Polly Chuck had to own up that it was safer than a home in the open could possibly be, and Johnny went on digging. He made a long hall down to the snugest of bedrooms, deep, deep down under ground. Then he made a long back hall, and all the sand from this he carried out the front way. By and by he made a back door at the end of the back hall, and it opened right behind a big stone fallen from the old stone wall. You would never have guessed that there was a back door there.

Their new house was finished now, and Johnny Chuck and Polly Chuck sat on the door-step and watched jolly, round, red Mr. Sun go to bed behind the Purple Hills and were happy.

(The Adventures of Johnny Chuck, Chapter 14)

STORY 357. April 5, 1913

Sammy Jay Finds the New House

Johnny Chuck was missed from his old home on the Green Meadows. If he had known how much he was missed, he certainly would have tried to go back for at least a call on his old neighbors.

There had been great surprise when it had been discovered that Jimmy Skunk was living in Johnny’s old house, and at first some of the little meadow people were inclined to look at Jimmy a wee bit distrustfully when he told how Johnny Chuck had given away his house.

But when Johnny sent back word by the Merry Little Breezes that it was true, they believed Jimmy Skunk and forgot the unpleasant things that they had begun to hint at about him. But they one and all thought that Johnny Chuck must be crazy. Yes, sir, they thought that Johnny Chuck must be crazy. They were sure of it when the Merry Little Breezes brought word of how Johnny had started out to see the world.

But everybody was so busy about their own affairs in the beautiful bright spring-time that they couldn’t spend much time wondering about Johnny Chuck. They missed him every time they passed his old house and then forgot him; that is, most of the little meadow people did.

Peter Rabbit didn’t. Peter used to stop every day to gossip with Johnny Chuck and tell him all the news. And now that Johnny Chuck was no longer there, Peter missed him greatly. Jimmy Skunk was always asleep or off somewhere. Besides, he was such a traveler that he knew all the news almost as soon as Peter himself.

The Merry Little Breezes told Peter that Johnny Chuck was still on the Green Meadows, hunting for a new home, so Peter made up his mind that just as soon as Johnny got settled, Peter would hunt him up and call. You see, he never dreamed that Johnny would leave the Green Meadows, and he thought that of course the Merry Little Breezes would tell him just where Johnny Chuck's new house was, whenever it was built. But there is where Peter made a mistake.

The Merry Little Breezes are the friends of all the little meadow and forest people, but they wouldn't be very long if they told everything that they find out

Their merry tongues they guard full well
And things they shouldn't never tell,
For long ago they learned the way
To keep a secret night and day.

And so when they found Johnny Chuck's new house in the corner of Farmer Brown's old orchard, they promised Johnny that they wouldn't tell anybody, and they didn't. So it was a long time before anyone else found out what had become of Johnny Chuck, for no one thought of looking in the corner of the old orchard.

The Merry Little Breezes used to come every day and bring Johnny Chuck the news, and he and Polly Chuck would laugh and tickle, as they thought of Peter Rabbit hunting and hunting and never finding them.

Then one morning, as Johnny Chuck sat on his doorstep, half dozing in the sun with his heart filled with contentment, he happened to look up straight into two sharp eyes peering down at him from among the leaves of the apple tree under which he had built his house.

He knew those eyes. They were such sharp eyes that they were unpleasant. He didn't even have to look for the blue and white coat of the owner to know who had found his snug home. But he pretended to keep right on dozing, and pretty soon the owner of the eyes disappeared without making a sound.

"Oh, dear," sighed Johnny Chuck, "now the whole world will know where we live, for that was Sammy Jay." Then his face brightened as he added: "Anyway, he didn't see Polly Chuck, and he doesn't know anything about her, so I'll keep twice as sharp a watch as before."

(The Adventures of Johnny Chuck, Chapter 15)

STORY 358. April 7, 1913

Sammy Jay Plans Mischief.

Mischief may not mean to be really truly bad,
But somehow it seems to make other people sad;
Does a mean, unpleasant thing and tries to think it fun;
Then, alas, it runs away when trouble has begun.

Illustrations. March 31 to April 5, 1913.



352. Why Johnny Chuck Didn't Fight



353. The Greatest Thing in the World



354. Johnny Chuck Proves His Love



355. Polly and Johnny Chuck Go House Hunting



356. A New Home at Last



357. Sammy Jay Finds the New House

Of all the little people who live in the Green Forest and on the Green Meadows, none is more mischievous than Sammy Jay. It seems sometimes as if there was more mischief under that pert little cap Sammy Jay wears than in the heads of all the other little meadow and forest people put together. When he isn't actually in mischief, Sammy Jay is planning mischief. You see it has grown to be a habit with Sammy Jay, and habits, especially bad habits, have a way of growing and growing.

Now Sammy Jay had no quarrel with Johnny Chuck. Oh, my, no! He would have told you that he liked Johnny Chuck. Everybody likes Johnny Chuck. But just as soon as Sammy Jay found Johnny Chuck's new house, he began to plan mischief. He didn't really want any harm to come to Johnny Chuck, but he wanted to make Johnny uncomfortable. That is Sammy Jay's idea of fun—seeing somebody else uncomfortable. So he slipped away to a thick hemlock tree in the Green Forest to try to think of some plan to tease Johnny Chuck and make him uncomfortable.

Of course he knew that Johnny had hidden his new house in the corner of Farmer Brown's old orchard because he wanted it to be a secret. He didn't know why Johnny wanted it a secret and he didn't care. If Johnny wanted it a secret, it would be fun to tell everybody about it. As he sat wondering who he should tell first; he saw Reddy Fox trotting down the Lone Little Path.

"Hi, Reddy Fox!" he shouted.

Reddy looked up. "Hello, Sammy Jay! What have you got on your mind this morning?" said Reddy.

"Nothing much," replied Sammy Jay. "What's the news?"

Reddy grinned. "There isn't any news," said he. "I was just going to ask you the same thing."

It was Sammy Jay's turn to grin, "Just as if I could tell you any news, Reddy Fox! Just as if I could tell you any news!" he exclaimed. "Why, everybody knows that you are so smart that you find out everything as soon as it happens."

Reddy Fox felt flattered. You know people who do a great deal of flattering themselves are often the very easiest to flatter if you know how. Reddy pretended to be very modest; but no one likes to be thought smart and important more than Reddy Fox does, and it pleased him greatly that Sammy Jay should think him so smart that no one could tell him any news. Sammy knew this perfectly well, and he chuckled to himself as he watched Reddy Fox pretending to be so modest.

"Have you called on Johnny Chuck at his new home yet?" asked Sammy Jay, in the most matter of fact way.

"No," replied Reddy, "but I mean to, soon." He said this just as if he knew all about Johnny Chuck's new home, when all the time he hadn't the remotest idea in the world where it was. In fact he had hunted and hunted for it, but hadn't found a trace of it. And all the time Sammy Jay knew that Reddy didn't know where it was. But Sammy didn't let on that he knew. No, sir; he didn't let on.

"I just happened to be up in Farmer Brown's old orchard this morning, so I thought I'd pay Johnny Chuck a call," said Sammy, and chuckled as he saw Reddy's ears prick up. "By the way, he thinks you don't know where he lives now."

"Huh!" said Reddy Fox. "As if Johnny Chuck could fool me! Well, I must be moving along. Good-by, Sammy Jay."

Reddy trotted off towards the Green Meadows, but the minute he was out of sight of Sammy Jay, he turned towards Farmer Brown's old orchard, just as Sammy Jay had known he would.

"I guess Johnny Chuck will have a visitor," chuckled Sammy Jay, as he started to look for Jimmy Skunk.

(The Adventures of Johnny Chuck, Chapter 16).

STORY 359. April 8, 1913

More Mischief.

Mischief's like a snowball
Sent rolling down a hill;
With every turn it bigger grows
And bigger, bigger still.

Sammy Jay had started mischief by telling Reddy Fox where Johnny Chuck's new house was. If you had asked him, Sammy Jay would have said that he hadn't told. All he had said was that he had happened to be up in Farmer Brown's old orchard and so had called on Johnny Chuck in his new house. He knew that Johnny Chuck wanted to keep that new house a secret, and because Sammy Jay likes to do mean things he had started out to tell Johnny's secret just to plague Johnny Chuck. Reddy Fox was the first to come along and Sammy had told him just enough to start Reddy off to hunt for that new house.

Now Reddy Fox is very sly, oh, very sly. He had pretended to Sammy Jay that he knew all the time where Johnny Chuck was living. When he left Sammy Jay, he had started in the direction of the Green Meadows, just as if he had no thought of going over to Farmer Brown's old orchard.

But Sammy Jay is just as sly as Reddy Fox. He wasn't fooled for one minute, not one little minute. He chuckled to himself as he started to look for Jimmy Skunk. Then he changed his mind.

"I think I'll go up to the old orchard myself!" said Sammy Jay, and away he flew.

He got there first and hid in the top of a big apple tree, where he could see all that went on. It wasn't long before he saw Reddy Fox steal out from the Green Forest and over to the old orchard. Reddy was nervous, very nervous. You see, it was broad daylight, and the old orchard was very near Farmer Brown's house. Reddy knew that he ought to have waited until night, but he knew that then Johnny Chuck would be fast

asleep, Now, perhaps, Johnny Chuck, thinking that no one knew where he lived, would not be on watch, and he might be able to catch Johnny.

So Reddy, with one eye on Farmer Brown's house and one eye on the watch for some sign of Johnny Chuck, stole into the old orchard. Every few steps he would stop and look and listen. At every little noise he would start nervously. Then Sammy Jay would chuckle under his breath.

So Reddy Fox crept and tiptoed about through the old orchard. Every minute he grew more nervous, and every minute he grew more disappointed, for he could find no sign of Johnny Chuck's house. He began to think that Sammy Jay had fooled him, and the very thought made him grind his teeth. At last he decided to give it up.

He was down in the far corner of the old orchard, close by the old stone wall now, and he got all ready to jump over the old stone wall, when he just happened to look on the other side of the big apple tree he was under, and there was what he was looking for—Johnny Chuck's new house! Johnny Chuck wasn't in sight, but there was the new house, and Johnny must be either inside or not far away. Reddy grinned. It was a sly, wicked, hungry grin. He flattened himself out in the grass behind the big apple tree.

"I'll give Johnny Chuck the surprise of his life!" muttered Reddy Fox under his breath.

Now Sammy Jay had been watching all this time. He knew that Johnny Chuck was safely inside his house, for Johnny had seen Reddy when he first came into the old orchard. And Sammy knew that Johnny Chuck knew that when Reddy found that new house, he would hide just as he had done.

"Johnny Chuck won't come out again today, and there won't be any excitement at all," thought Sammy Jay in disappointment, for he had hoped to see a fight between Reddy Fox and Johnny Chuck. Just then Sammy looked over to Farmer Brown's house, and there was Farmer Brown's boy getting ready to saw wood. The imp of mischief under Sammy's pert cap gave him an idea. He flew over to the old apple tree, just over Reddy's head, and began to scream at the top of his lungs.

Farmer Brown's boy stopped work and looked over towards the old orchard.

"When a Jay screams like that there is usually a Fox around," he muttered, as he unfastened Bowser the Hound.

(The Adventures of Johnny Chuck, Chapter 17)

STORY 360. April 9, 1913

Farmer Brown's Boy Makes a Discovery.

Reddy Fox glared up at Sammy Jay. Reddy was flat on his stomach behind an old apple tree in the far corner of Farmer Brown's old orchard, and on the other side of the tree was Johnny Chuck's new house. Reddy was hiding there to catch Johnny Chuck. Up in the top of the apple tree Sammy Jay was screaming at the top of his lungs.

“What’s the matter with you?” snarled Reddy Fox. “Why don’t you mind your own affairs, instead of making trouble for other people?” You see, Reddy was afraid that Johnny Chuck would hear Sammy Jay and take warning.

“Hello, Reddy Fox! I thought you had gone down to the Green Meadows!” Sammy said this as if he was very much surprised to see Reddy there. He wasn’t, for you know he had been watching Reddy hunt for Johnny Chuck’s new house, but Reddy had pretended that he was going down to the Green Meadows early that morning, and so now Sammy pretended that he had thought that Reddy really had gone.

“I changed my mind!” he snapped. “What are you screaming so for?”

“Just to exercise my lungs, so as to be sure that I can scream when I want to,” replied Sammy, screaming still louder.

“Well, go somewhere else and scream; I want to take a nap,” said Reddy crossly.

Now Sammy Jay knew perfectly well that Reddy Fox had no thought of taking a nap but was hiding there to try to catch Johnny Chuck. And Sammy knew that Farmer Brown’s boy could hear him scream, and that he knew that when Sammy screamed that way it meant there was a Fox about. Sitting in the top of the apple tree, Sammy could see Farmer Brown’s boy starting for the old orchard, with Bowser the Hound running ahead of him.

Farmer Brown’s boy had no gun, so Sammy knew that no harm would come to Reddy, but that Reddy would get a dreadful scare; and that is what Sammy wanted, just out of pure mischief. So he screamed louder than ever.

Reddy Fox lost his temper. He sat up and called Sammy Jay all the bad names he could think of. He forgot where he was. He told Sammy Jay what he thought of him and what he would do to him if ever he caught him.

Sammy Jay kept right on screaming. He made such a noise that Reddy didn’t hear footsteps coming nearer and nearer. Suddenly there was a great roar right behind him—“Bow, wow, wow! Bow, wow, wow, wow!” just like that.

Reddy was so frightened that he didn’t even look to see where he was jumping, and so he bumped his head against the apple-tree. Then off he started for the Green Forest, with Bowser the Hound at his heels.

Sammy Jay laughed till he lost his breath and nearly tumbled off his perch. Then he flew away, still laughing. He thought it the greatest joke ever.

Farmer Brown’s boy had followed Bowser the Hound into the old orchard.

“I wonder what a Fox was doing up here in broad daylight,” said he, talking to himself. “Perhaps one of my hens has stolen her nest down here, and he has found it. I’ll have a look, anyway.”

So he walked on down to the far corner of the old orchard, straight to the place from which he had seen Reddy Fox jump. When he got there, of course he saw Johnny Chuck’s new house right away.

“Ho!” cried Farmer Brown’s boy. “Bre’r Fox¹⁵ was hunting Chucks. I’ll keep my eye on this, and if Mr. Chuck makes any trouble in my garden, I’ll know where to catch him.”

(The Adventures of Johnny Chuck, Chapter 18)

STORY 361. April 10, 1913

Johnny Chuck’s Pride.

Ever since Farmer Brown’s boy and Reddy Fox had found his new house in the far corner of the old orchard, Johnny Chuck had been worried. It was not that he was afraid for himself. Oh, my, no! Johnny Chuck felt perfectly able to take care of himself. But there was Polly Chuck! He was terribly afraid that something might happen to Polly Chuck. You see she was not big and strong like him, and then Polly Chuck was apt to be careless. So for a while Johnny Chuck worried a great deal.

But Reddy Fox didn’t come again in daytime. You see Bowser the Hound had given him such a scare that he didn’t dare to. He sometimes came at night and sniffed hungrily at Johnny Chuck’s doorway, but Johnny and Polly were safe inside, and this didn’t trouble them a bit. And Farmer Brown’s boy seemed to have forgotten all about the new house. So after a while Johnny Chuck stopped worrying so much. The fact is Johnny Chuck had something else to think about. He had a secret. Yes, sir, Johnny Chuck had a secret.

Sammy Jay came up to the old orchard almost every morning. His sharp eyes were not long in finding out that Johnny Chuck had a secret, but try as he would he could not find out what that secret was. Whatever it was, it made Johnny Chuck very happy. He would come out on his doorstep and smile and sometimes give a funny little whistle of pure joy.

It puzzled Sammy Jay a great deal. He couldn’t see why Johnny Chuck should be any happier than he ever was. To be sure it was a happy time of year. Everybody was happy, for it was spring time, and the Green Forest and the Green Meadows, even the Old Pasture, were very lovely. But somehow Sammy Jay felt sure that it was something more than this, a secret that Johnny Chuck was keeping all to himself, that was making him so happy. But what it was, Sammy Jay couldn’t imagine. He spent so much time thinking about it and wondering what it could be, that it actually kept him out of mischief.

One morning Johnny Chuck came out, looking happier than ever. He chuckled and chuckled as only a happy Chuck can. Then he did foolish things. He kicked up his heels. He rolled over and over in the grass. He whistled. He even tried to sing, which is something no Chuck can do or should ever try to do. Then suddenly he scrambled to his feet, carefully brushed his coat, and tried to look very dignified. He strutted back and forth in front of his doorway, as if he was very proud of something. There was pride in the very way in which he took each step. There was pride in the very way in which he held his head. It was too much for Sammy Jay.

15 Farmer Brown’s boy is familiar with Uncle Remus stories.

“What are you so proud about, Johnny Chuck?” he demanded, in his harsh voice, “If I didn’t have a better looking coat than you’ve got, I wouldn’t put on airs!”

You know Sammy Jay is very proud of his own handsome blue and white coat and dearly loves to show it off.

“It isn’t that,” said Johnny Chuck.

“Well, if it is because you think yourself so smart to hide yourself up here in the old orchard, let me tell you that I found you out long ago, and so did Reddy Fox, and Bowser the Hound, and Farmer Brown’s boy,” sneered Sammy Jay in the most disagreeable way.

“It isn’t that,” said Johnny Chuck.

“Well, what is it, then?” snapped Sammy Jay.

“That’s for you to find out,” replied Johnny Chuck.

There’s foolish pride and silly pride and pride of low degree;
A better pride is honest pride, and that’s the pride for me.

And with that, Johnny Chuck disappeared in his new house.

(The Adventures of Johnny Chuck, Chapter 19)

STORY 362. April 11, 1913

Sammy Jay Understands.

It was a beautiful morning. Jolly, round, red Mr. Sun had thrown his bedclothes off very early and started to climb up the sky, smiling his broadest. Old Mother West Wind had swept his path clear of clouds. The Merry Little Breezes, who, you know, are Mother West Wind’s children, had danced across the Green Meadows up to the old orchard, where they pelted each other with white and pink petals of apple blossoms until the ground was covered. Each apple tree was like a huge bouquet of loveliness. Yes, indeed, it was very beautiful that spring morning.

Sammy Jay had gotten up almost as early as Mr. Sun and Old Mother West Wind. As soon as he had swallowed his breakfast, he flew up to the old orchard and hid among the white and pink apple blossoms to watch for Johnny Chuck. You see, he knew that Johnny Chuck had some sort of a secret which filled Johnny with very great pride; but what it was Sammy Jay couldn’t even guess, and nothing troubles Sammy Jay quite so much as the feeling that he cannot find out the secrets of other people. So he sat very, very still among the apple blossoms and waited and watched.

By and by Johnny Chuck appeared on his doorstep. He seemed very much excited, did Johnny Chuck. He sat up very straight and looked this way and looked that way. He looked up in the apple-trees, and Sammy Jay held his breath, for fear that Johnny would see him.

But Sammy was so well hidden that, bright as Johnny Chuck’s eyes are, they failed

to see him. Then Johnny Chuck actually climbed up on the old stone wall so as to see better, and he sat there a long time, looking and looking.

Sammy Jay grew impatient. "He seems to be terribly watchful this morning. I never knew him to be so watchful before. I don't understand it," muttered Sammy to himself.

After a while Johnny Chuck seemed quite satisfied that there was no one about. He hopped down from the old stone wall and scampered over to the doorway of his new house, and there he began to chatter. Sammy Jay stretched his neck until it ached, trying to hear what Johnny Chuck was saying, but he couldn't because Johnny's head was inside his doorway.

Pretty soon Johnny Chuck backed out and sat up, and he looked very proud and important. Then Sammy Jay saw something that nearly took his breath away. It was the head of Polly Chuck peeping out of the doorway. It was the first time that he had seen Polly Chuck.

"Why," gasped Sammy Jay, "it must be that Johnny Chuck has a mate, and I didn't know a thing about it! So that's his secret and the reason he has appeared so proud lately!"

Polly Chuck came out on the doorstep. She looked just as proud as Johnny Chuck, and at the same time she seemed terribly anxious. She sat up beside Johnny Chuck, and she looked this way and that way, just as Johnny had. Then she put her head in at the doorway and began to call in the softest voice.

In a minute Sammy Jay saw something more. It surprised him so that he nearly lost his balance. It was another head peeping out of the doorway, a head just like Johnny Chuck's, only it was a teeny-weeny one. Then there was another and another! Polly kept talking and talking in the softest voice, while Johnny Chuck swelled himself up until he looked as if he would burst with pride.

Sammy Jay understood now why Johnny Chuck had been so proud for the last few days. It was because he had a family. Sammy looked down at the three little Chucks sitting on the doorstep, trying to sit up the way Johnny Chuck sat, and they looked so funny that Sammy forgot himself and laughed right out loud. In a flash the three little Chucks and Polly Chuck had disappeared inside the house, while Johnny Chuck looked up angrily. He knew that his secret was a secret no longer.

(The Adventures of Johnny Chuck, Chapter 20)

STORY 363. April 12, 1913

Sammy Jay Has a Change of Heart.

There's no one ever quite so bad
That somewhere way down deep inside
A little goodness does not find
A place wherein to creep and hide.

It is so with Sammy Jay. Yes, sir, it is so with Sammy Jay. You may think that because Sammy Jay is vain, a trouble-maker and a thief, he is all bad. He isn't. There is some good in Sammy Jay, just as there is some good in everybody. If there wasn't, Old Mother Nature never, never would allow Sammy Jay to go his mischievous way through the Green Forest. He dearly loves to get other people into all kinds of trouble, and this is one reason why nobody loves him. But if you watch out sharp enough, you will find that hidden under that beautiful blue and white coat of his there really is some good. You may have to look a long time for it, but sooner or later you will find it. Johnny Chuck did.

Sammy Jay had already made a lot of trouble for Johnny Chuck. You see he had been the first of the little forest and meadow people to find Johnny Chuck's new house. And then, just to make trouble for Johnny Chuck, he had told Reddy Fox about it, and after that he had called Bowser the Hound and Farmer Brown's boy over to it. Now he had discovered Johnny Chuck's greatest secret—that Johnny had a family. What a chance to make trouble now!

Sammy started for the Green Forest as fast as his wings could take him. He would tell Reddy Fox and Redtail the Hawk. They were very fond of young Chucks. It would be great fun to see the fright of Johnny Chuck and his family when Reddy Fox or Redtail the Hawk appeared.

Sammy Jay chuckled wickedly as he flew. When he reached the Green Forest and stopped in his favorite hemlock tree to rest, he was still chuckling. But by that time, it was a different kind of a chuckle. Yes, sir, it was a different kind of a chuckle. It was a better chuckle to hear. The fact is, Sammy Jay was no longer chuckling over the thought of the trouble he could make. He was laughing at the memory of how funny those three little baby Chucks had looked sitting up on Johnny Chuck's doorstep and trying to do whatever Johnny Chuck did. The more he thought about it, the more he tickled and laughed.

Right in the midst of his laughter along came Redtail the Hawk. Sammy Jay opened his mouth to call to Redtail and tell him about Johnny Chuck's secret. Then he closed it again with a snap.

"I won't tell him yet," said Sammy to himself, "for he might catch one of those baby Chucks, and they are such funny little fellows that that would really be too bad. I guess I'll wait a while." And with that, off flew Sammy Jay to hunt for some other mischief. You see, he had had a change of heart. The little goodness way down deep inside had come out of hiding.

But of course, Johnny Chuck didn't know this, and over in his new house in the far corner of the old orchard, he and Polly Chuck were worrying and worrying, for they felt sure that now everyone would know their secret, and it wouldn't be safe for the dear little baby Chucks to so much as put their funny little noses outside the door.

(The Adventures of Johnny Chuck, Chapter 21)

Illustrations. April 7 to April 12, 1913.



358.Sammy Jay Plans Mischief



359.More Mischief



360.Farmer Brown's Boy Makes a Discovery



361.Johnny Chuck's Pride



362.Sammy Jay Understands



363.Sammy Jay Has a Change of Heart

STORY 364. April 14, 1913

Johnny Chuck is Kept Busy.

Johnny Chuck is naturally lazy. You see, Johnny has very simple tastes and usually he is contented. He does not have to go far from his own doorstep to get all he wants to eat. He does not have to hunt for his food, as so many of the little meadow and forest people do, and so he has a great deal of time to sit on his doorstep and watch the world go by and dream pleasant daydreams and grow fat. Now people who do not have to work usually become lazy. It is the easiest habit in the world to learn and the hardest to get over. And so, because he seldom has to work, Johnny Chuck quite naturally is lazy.

But Johnny can work when there really is need of it. No one, unless it is Digger the Badger or Miner the Mole, can dig faster than Johnny Chuck. And when there is real need of working, Johnny works with a will. When he was a very tiny Chuck, old Mother Chuck had taught him this:

When work there is that must be done
Don't fret and whine and spoil the day!
The quicker that you do your work
The longer time you'll have to play.

Johnny never has forgotten this, and when it is really necessary that he should work, no one works harder than he does. But he always first makes sure that it is necessary work and that he will not be wasting his time in doing foolish, unnecessary things.

And now Johnny Chuck was the busiest he had ever been in all his life. If he felt lazy these beautiful spring days, he didn't have time to think about it. No, sir, he actually didn't have time to remember that he is naturally lazy. You see, he had a family to look out for—three babies to find sweet, tender young clover for and to teach all the things that every Chuck should know, and to watch out for, that no harm should come to them. So Johnny Chuck was busy, so busy that he hardly had time to get enough to eat himself.

Every morning Johnny would come out as soon as jolly, round, red Mr. Sun began his daily climb up in the blue, blue sky. He would look this way and look that way to make sure that Reddy Fox or Granny Fox or Redtail the Hawk or Bowser the Hound or any other danger was nowhere near. And he never forgot to look up in the apple trees to make sure that Sammy Jay was not there. Then he would call to Polly Chuck and the three baby Chucks. Polly Chuck would come out with a very worried air, and after her would come the three funny little baby Chucks, who would roll and tumble over each other on the doorstep. When he thought they had played enough, Johnny Chuck would lead the way along a little private path which he had made through the grass. After him, one behind another, would trot the three little Chucks, and behind them would march Polly Chuck, to see that none went astray.

When they reached the patch of tender, sweet, young clover, Johnny Chuck would sit up very straight and still, watching as sharp as he knew how for the least sign of

danger. When the three little stomachs were full of sweet, tender, young clover, he would proudly lead the way home again, and then as before he would sit up very straight and watch for danger, while the three baby Chucks sprawled out on the doorstep for a sun nap. O, those were busy days for Johnny Chuck, and anxious days, too! You see he had not forgotten that Sammy Jay had found out his secret, and he hadn't the least doubt in the world that Sammy Jay would tell Reddy Fox. So, from the first thing in the morning until the very last thing at night, Johnny Chuck was on the watch for danger.

And all the time, though Johnny didn't know it, a pair of sharp eyes were watching him from a snug hiding-place in one of the old apple-trees. Whose were they? Why, Sammy Jay's, to be sure! You see, Sammy Jay hadn't told Johnny Chuck's great secret, after all.

(The Adventures of Johnny Chuck, Chapter 22)

STORY 365. April 15, 1913

The School in the Old Orchard.

Little Foxes, little Chucks,
Little Squirrels, Mice and Mink,
Just like little boys and girls,
Go to school to learn to think.

You didn't know that, did you? Well, it's a fact. Yes, sir, it's a fact. All the babies born in the Green Forest or on the Green Meadows or around the Smiling Pool have to go to school just as soon as they are big enough to leave their own doorsteps. They go to the greatest school in the world, and it is called the School of Experience¹⁶.

Old Mother Nature has charge of it, but the teachers usually are father and mother for the first few weeks, anyway. After that Old Mother Nature herself gives them a few lessons, and a very stern teacher she is. They just have to learn her lessons. If they don't, something dreadful is almost sure to happen.

Of course Sammy Jay knew all this, because he had had to go to school when he was a little fellow. So Sammy was not much surprised when, from his snug hiding-place in one of the old apple trees, he discovered that there was a school in Farmer Brown's old orchard. Johnny Chuck was the teacher and his three baby Chucks were the pupils. Sammy Jay was so interested in that funny little school in the old orchard that he quite forgot to think about mischief.

The very first lesson that the three little Chucks had to learn was obedience. Johnny Chuck was very particular about that. You see he knew that unless they learned this first of all, none of the other lessons would do them much good. They must first learn to mind instantly, without asking questions. Dear me, dear me, Johnny Chuck certainly did have his hands full, teaching those three little Chucks to mind! They were such lively little chaps, and there was so much that was new and wonderful to see, that

16 See William J. Long. *School of the Woods*, 1902

it was dreadfully hard work to sit perfectly still, just because Johnny Chuck told them to. But if they didn't mind instantly, they were sure to have their ears soundly boxed, and sometimes were sent back to the house without a taste of the sweet, tender, young clover of which they were so fond.

After a few lessons of this kind, they found out that it was always best to obey instantly, and then Johnny began to teach them other things, things which it is very important that every Chuck should know.

First, there were signals. When Johnny whistled a certain way, it meant "A stranger in sight; possible danger!"

Then each little Chuck would sit up very straight and not move the teeniest, weeniest bit, so that from a little distance they looked for all the world like tiny stumps. But all the time their sharp little eyes would be looking this way and that way, to see what the danger might be. After a while Johnny would give another little whistle, which meant "Danger past." Then they would once more begin to fill their little stomachs with sweet, tender, young clover.

Sometimes, however, Johnny would whistle sharply. That meant "Run." Then they would scamper as fast as they could along the nearest little path to the house under the old apple tree in the far corner, and never once look around. They would dive head first, one after the other, in at the doorway, and not show their noses outside again until Johnny or Polly Chuck told them they could.

Then there was a still different whistle. It meant "Danger very near; lie low!" When they heard that, they flattened themselves right down in the grass just wherever they happened to be, and held their breath and didn't move until Johnny signaled that they might. Of course, there never was any real danger. Johnny was just teaching them, so that when danger did come, as it surely would, sooner or later, they would know just what to do.

It surely was a funny little school, and sometimes Sammy Jay had hard work to keep from laughing right out.

(The Adventures of Johnny Chuck, Chapter 23)

STORY 366. April 16, 1913

Sammy Jay Proves That He is Not All Bad.

Sammy Jay hadn't had so much fun for a long time as he found in watching the funny little school in Farmer Brown's old orchard, where Johnny Chuck was teaching his three baby Chucks the things that every little Chuck must learn, if he would grow up into a big Chuck. When they had learned to mind without waiting to ask why, and had learned the signals which told them just what to do when danger was near, Johnny began to lead them farther and farther away from home.

He took them up along the old stone wall and showed them how to find safe hiding-places among the stones. Then he took them off a little way and suddenly

gave the danger signal. It was funny, very funny indeed to see the three little Chucks scamper for the old stone wall and crawl out of sight. The first time, two of them tried to squeeze into the same hole together, and each was in such a hurry that he wouldn't let the other go first. Then both lost their tempers and they began to fight about it, quite forgetting that if there was really any danger near, they surely would come to harm. Such a scolding as Johnny Chuck did give those two little Chucks! Then he made them try it all over again.

Once he found a foot print which Reddy Fox had made in some soft earth during the night, and made each little Chuck smell of it, while he told them all about Reddy and old Granny Fox and how smart and sly they were and how very, very fond they were of tender young Chucks for dinner. The three little Chucks shivered when they smelled of Reddy's track, and the hair along their backs stood up in a way that was very funny to see.

Then Johnny Chuck took them over to the edge of the old orchard, where they could peep out over the Green Meadows. He pointed out old Whitetail the Marsh Hawk, sailing back and forth over the meadows, and told them how once, when he was a little Chuck and had run away from home, old Whitetail had nearly caught him¹⁷. He told them about Farmer Brown's boy and about Bowser the Hound and a great many other things that little Chucks should learn about.

Now all the time that Johnny Chuck was teaching these things, he was keeping the sharpest kind of a watch for danger, and there were many times when he would give the danger signal. Then they would keep perfectly still, or else scamper along the little paths which Johnny has made to the safety of the snug home under the old apple tree. Then they would all lie flat down in the grass and keep perfectly still, or else scamper as fast as they could along the little paths which Johnny had made, to the safety of the snug home under the old apple-tree. But even the most watchful are surprised sometimes. One morning, when Johnny Chuck had led the three little Chucks farther from home than usual, Farmer Brown's boy took it into his head to visit the old orchard. Johnny Chuck did not see him coming. You see, the orchard grass had grown so tall that even when he sat up his very straightest, Johnny could not always see over the top of it. So this morning he failed to see Farmer Brown's boy coming.

But Sammy Jay, sitting in his snug hiding-place in the top of one of the old apple trees, saw him. At first Sammy Jay's sharp eyes twinkled. There would be some fun now! Perhaps Farmer Brown's boy would catch one of the little Chucks! Sammy Jay could picture to himself the fright of Johnny Chuck and the three little Chucks. He fairly hugged himself in delight, for you know Sammy Jay dearly loves to see other people in trouble. Then he thought of all the fun he had had watching those three little Chucks learn their lessons, and suddenly the thought of anything happening to them made Sammy Jay feel uncomfortable. Almost without stopping to think, he screamed at the top of his lungs:

"Run, Johnny Chuck, run! Here comes Farmer Brown's boy!"

And Johnny Chuck ran. He didn't wait to ask questions or even to look. He started

17 STORY 3, 1912.

the three little Chucks ahead of him, and he nipped their heels to make them run faster. And just in time they reached the snug house under the old apple-tree in the far corner. Farmer Brown's boy was just in time to see them disappear. He watched Sammy Jay flying over to the Green Forest and screaming "Thief! thief!" as he flew.

"I wonder now if that jay warned those chucks purposely," said he, as he scratched his head thoughtfully.

(The Adventures of Johnny Chuck, Chapter 24)

STORY 367. April 17, 1913

The Little Chuck Who Didn't Mind.

Do it right when you're told to;
Do it right away:
Don't stop to talk about it,
Hurry to obey.

Johnny Chuck's three baby Chucks had to say that over three times every morning before they left the snug house under the apple tree in the far corner of Farmer Brown's old orchard. That was so that they would surely remember in time of need. Now, one of those baby chucks was a wee, wee bit bigger and a wee wee bit stronger and a wee, wee bit smarter than the others. After a while he found it out. It was a bad thing. Yes, sir, it was a bad thing to find out that he was a wee, wee bit bigger and a wee, wee bit stronger and a wee, wee bit smarter than the others. You see, he was like a lot of other people; he began to think he hadn't anything to learn.

Of course, he had to say that little verse with the rest of them, but he had begun to think that he knew all there was to know and that that little verse was meant for the others and not for him. So he began to do as he pleased. He was smart enough to find out that a lot of the danger signals which Johnny Chuck gave out were not for any real danger at all, but just meant for lessons. So sometimes this little Chuck took his time about obeying. When the signal to run was sounded, he would wait for just one or two more bites of sweet, tender, young clover. So he would be the last to reach the safety of the snug house under the old apple tree. Of course, Johnny Chuck scolded him, but he didn't mind a scolding now and then so long as he had his own way.

"Someday you'll get in trouble by not minding promptly, and something dreadful will happen to you," scolded Johnny Chuck.

But this little Chuck who thought himself so smart just kept right on doing as he pleased. Pretty soon he began to actually disobey. He went a little bit further than Johnny Chuck said he should go. He didn't stay with the others when Johnny Chuck told him to. Whenever Johnny Chuck's back was turned, he would slip away by himself.

"I'm smart enough to look out for myself. I've learned all there is to learn, and if I'm ever going to see the world it is time I began," he would say to himself. Then he

would steal a little further along some path which Johnny Chuck had forbidden him to go on.

One afternoon the three little Chucks were getting their supper at a favorite patch of sweet clover. Johnny Chuck was a little way off, sitting up very straight, watching for danger. Suddenly he gave the danger signal. The two littlest Chucks started for home as fast as their small legs could take them. But the little Chuck who thought himself so smart kept right on eating. He didn't even look up. He just smiled and said to himself:

"How foolish to run for nothing and then have to walk all the way back here! We've had that danger signal three times today, when there wasn't any danger, and it's all foolishness. I'm going to stay right here and eat my fill and laugh at the others when they come back. My, how good this clover does—" The smart little Chuck didn't finish. Instead, he gave a frightened squeak. A shadow fell across the sweet clover patch. Something dark dropped over him, and then something held him tight, so tight he could hardly breathe. His little heart went pit-a-pat with fear. How he did wish he had minded that danger signal!

STORY 368. April 18, 1913

What Happened to the Little Chuck Who Was So Smart.

The most frightened little Chuck in all the world was the biggest and strongest and smartest of Johnny Chuck's three baby Chucks, and it was all because he had thought him so smart that he didn't need to mind. Yes, sir, it was all because he thought himself so smart that he could do just as he pleased. So when he had heard Johnny Chuck's danger signal he kept right on eating sweet, tender, young clover, instead of running with his two little brothers for the safety of the snug house under the old apple tree in the far corner of the old orchard. And then something dark had fallen over him and now something was holding him so tight that he could hardly breathe.

He felt himself lifted up, up, up. The thing that was dropped over him was lifted off. It was the soft hat of Farmer Brown's boy, though the little Chuck didn't know that. Because he was so frightened, he kept his eyes tight closed. Something began to stroke him very softly on the head. Somehow with every stroke he felt less frightened. Pretty soon he opened his eyes. Then he closed them again in a hurry. You see he had looked right into the freckled face of Farmer Brown's boy. He had never seen Farmer Brown's boy before, but Johnny Chuck had told him all about the master of Bowser the Hound and now he shivered and shook all over with fright. How he did wish he had not thought himself so smart, but had minded when he heard that, danger signal! What dreadful thing would happen to him now?

But nothing did happen right away and pretty soon he opened his eyes again. He was being carried up through the old orchard toward the great house where Farmer Brown's boy lives. By and by he was put into a prison out of which he could not climb,

try as he would. Of course, it was only a box, but to the little Chuck it was a prison. Then some sweet, tender, young clover was put in with him and a little dish (of course the little Chuck didn't know that it was a dish) full of milk.

For a long time, he was too frightened and miserable to eat. He just huddled up in one corner and wished and wished that he had minded. He wondered if his two little brothers missed him and if Johnny Chuck and Polly Chuck missed him and, oh, dear! he did so long to be back in the snug home in the far corner of the old orchard! He just couldn't help crying a little when he thought of it.

A stomach is a funny thing:
It makes demands that must be met.
It will insist on being filled
And never lets you quite forget.

This little Chuck found it so. He had made up his mind that he wouldn't eat. No, sir, he wouldn't eat a single thing. But after a while he began to grow hungry. He tried and tried to think of nothing but how miserable he was, but his little stomach was empty, and it just made him think of it. The more he thought of it the less he could think of anything else, and pretty soon, almost without knowing it, he was nibbling at the sweet, tender, young clover. How good it did taste! He nibbled a little more. Then he forgot everything but filling his empty little stomach and he ate and ate until he could not eat another mouthful. And then he discovered a funny thing. With his stomach full he didn't feel half so bad as he did before! No real harm had come to him yet and perhaps Farmer Brown's boy wasn't so bad as Johnny Chuck had thought he was. The little Chuck yawned. Then he yawned again. Two minutes later when Farmer Brown's boy peeped into the box the little Chuck was fast asleep.

STORY 369. April 19, 1913.

Johnny Chuck Tells Peter Rabbit His Troubles.

Johnny Chuck sat on his doorstep with a heavy heart. It was now two days since he had seen Farmer Brown's boy carry off one of his three baby Chucks, the one who had been the biggest, strongest and smartest, and, alas, the one who hadn't minded. So Johnny Chuck's heart was heavy. He could think of nothing but that lost baby. You see, Johnny Chuck had been very proud, very proud indeed of him and now he didn't know what had become of him or what dreadful thing might have happened to him.

Way down on the edge of the old orchard he caught just a glimpse of a bright blue coat. Sammy Jay was down there. Johnny's eyes snapped angrily.

"It's all his fault, every bit his fault!" he muttered. "If it hadn't been for him Farmer Brown's boy wouldn't have known anything about my house. I hate Sammy Jay!"

In his sorrow and trouble Johnny Chuck had quite forgotten how only a few days before Sammy Jay had given him warning that Farmer Brown's boy was coming. There was no room in his heart for anything but anger when he thought of Sammy Jay. It is

true that it really was Sammy Jay's fault in part. If Sammy Jay hadn't told Reddy Fox about Johnny Chuck's new house Reddy might not have found it. And if Reddy hadn't found it and hidden close by to try to catch Johnny Chuck, Sammy Jay wouldn't have had a chance to call Bowser the Hound and Farmer Brown's boy over there to give Reddy a scare. And if well, if Sammy Jay had not been so fond of mischief there might not have been any trouble at all.

That's the worst of mischief—no one knows where it is going to end. It may seem quite harmless in the beginning and then bring some great trouble to someone as it had in this case.

Start a ball to rolling down a little hill,
'Tis vain to try to stop it from rolling where it will.

That's the way with mischief. It is easy enough to start, but, oh, so hard to stop.

Now, though Johnny Chuck wouldn't have believed it if he had been told, Sammy Jay actually was sorry that the mischief he had started had brought all this trouble to Johnny. Usually, Sammy Jay doesn't care how much trouble he makes. In fact, the more he makes the more he seems to enjoy life. But this time he was truly sorry. You see, he had so much fun watching those three little Chucks learn their lessons in the funny little school in the old orchard that he didn't like to think of harm coming to any of them. He knew better than to go offer his sympathy to Johnny Chuck so he flew down to his favorite hemlock tree in the Green Forest to try to think of some way to try to undo the mischief he had done.

"Johnny Chuck wouldn't listen to me, but perhaps he would to Peter Rabbit. He and Peter used to be great friends. Peter doesn't know where Johnny has been living since he moved off of the Green Meadows, and I believe I'll go tell him."

To think is to act with Sammy Jay, and away he flew to the dear old briar patch, where Peter Rabbit lives, and this is how it happens that early that morning as he sat on his doorstep with a heavy heart Johnny Chuck saw two long ears pop up out of the grass along the old stonewall, and then the smiling face of Peter Rabbit. Johnny Chuck was glad to see Peter once more, and he tried to smile, too, but it is hard to smile with a heavy heart. Peter Rabbit saw right away that something was the matter. He stopped smiling and hurried over to sit beside Johnny Chuck on the doorstep.

Tell me all about it," said Peter Rabbit.

And Johnny Chuck did. He poured out all his trouble while Peter listened gravely.

STORY 370. April 21, 1913

Peter Rabbit Comforts Johnny Chuck.

Peter Rabbit opened his eyes very wide as he listened to all that Johnny Chuck had to tell him. At first he couldn't say a word because he was so surprised. You see he hadn't heard of Polly Chuck or the three baby Chucks, and it was very hard to believe that they really belonged to Johnny Chuck. But when Polly Chuck came out and was

Illustrations. April 14 to April 19, 1913.



364. Johnny Chuck is Kept Busy



365. The School in the Old Orchard



366. Sammy Jay Proves That He is Not All Bad



367. The Little Chuck Who Didn't Mind



368. What Happened to the Little Chuck Who Was so Smart



369. Johnny Chuck Tells Peter Rabbit His Troubles

introduced and then snuggled up against Johnny Chuck on the doorstep, Peter had to believe.

Johnny told Peter all that had happened since he first met Polly Chuck, how happy they had been, how proud they had been of the three baby Chucks, and how their hearts ached now because the biggest and strongest and smartest of their three babies had been caught and carried away by that dreadful Farmer Brown's boy. Great big tears rolled down the cheeks of Polly Chuck.

"Oh, dear! Oh, dear! I know I shall never, never see my beautiful Chuckie again!" she wailed. "And he was the brightest, smartest baby Chuck that ever lived!"

Johnny Chuck didn't cry as Polly Chuck did, but he winked very hard and cleared his throat several times. Peter Rabbit, who is very sympathetic, winked still harder and cleared his throat. Finally, he ventured to ask a question.

"If the lost little Chuck was the biggest and strongest and smartest of your three babies, how does it happen that he was caught while the others got away?" inquired Peter Rabbit.

Johnny Chuck hung his head. You see it is very hard, very hard, indeed, to admit that those we love are not always all that they should be, and sometimes will do wrong. If that little Chuck could have seen Johnny then he couldn't have helped feeling very much ashamed. You see, Johnny had to tell Peter that that little Chuck had been caught because he thought himself so smart that he didn't need to mind, and so when the danger signal had been sounded he hadn't run as his two little brothers had.

"I know," said Peter Rabbit. "I used to have that smart feeling when I was a very little fellow, and I had some very narrow escapes before I learned that I didn't know it all. Once when I just barely reached the dear old briar patch ahead of old Granny Fox she said something that I have never forgotten and never will. It was this:

Mr. Smarty thinks he's wise.
Thinks he knows it all and tries
To show off; but he will find
Some sad day that he's the kind
Trouble waits for sure as fate
And will capture soon or late.

"I began to realize that I didn't know as much as I thought I did, and now that I have grown up I still find that there is something to learn every day. What did you say that Farmer Brown's boy did with your baby Chuck?

"He carried him away up to the great house where he lives," said Johnny Chuck sadly.

"Perhaps Farmer Brown's boy isn't so bad as we think he is," replied Peter hopefully. Have you been up to Farmer Brown's house to see if you could find your baby?"

Johnny Chuck fairly gasped. "Me go up there! Why, Bowser the Hound would

get me before I could turn 'round and—and I'm not big enough to fight Bowser the Hound," said Johnny.

"That's so," replied Peter thoughtfully. "You couldn't fight him and you couldn't run away from him because your legs are not long enough. Now I might go up there and have a look around for you."

"Oh, Peter Rabbit, will you? Will you, Peter Rabbit?" cried Johnny Chuck and Polly Chuck together.

"I'll think about it," replied Peter. "I'll think about it. Now, I must be moving along."

And somehow Johnny Chuck felt strangely comforted as he watched Peter Rabbit hop over the old stone wall.

STORY 371. April 22, 1913

Johnny Chuck's Three Friends.

When winds are soft and skies are blue
And sunny is the weather,
Then everybody everywhere
May well seem friends together.
But winds blow fierce and skies turn black
And stormy grows the weather,
And then it is you find true friends
Are those who stick together.

Now, Peter Rabbit is one of the kind of friends who stick. When he left Johnny Chuck sitting on his doorstep in Farmer Brown's old orchard and worrying himself to death because of the dreadful things that might have happened to the smartest of his three babies, all because he didn't mind, and so was caught by Farmer Brown's boy, Peter felt almost as badly as Johnny Chuck did. You see, he and Johnny Chuck had been friends ever since they were teeny-weeny fellows. So when Peter found Johnny in trouble he felt just as if the trouble was really his own.

All the way back to the dear old briar patch Peter tried to think of some plan to help Johnny Chuck. He had told Johnny that perhaps he would go up to Farmer Brown's house and try to see what had become of the little Chuck. Now it was very brave of Peter to even think of such a thing, for you know Peter is naturally very timid. Whenever he thought of going up there, where Farmer Brown's boy and Bowser the Hound live, he shivered. Then he would become worried and remember how anxious and sorrowful Johnny Chuck had looked, and out of the tenderness of his heart he would suddenly grow very brave and make up his mind that he would do it.

Half way home he just happened to think of Unc' Billy Possum and Jimmy Skunk. He knew that they had many times been up to Farmer Brown's henhouse to steal eggs, and, of course, they knew all about Farmer Brown's dooryard and the hiding places

there. He would go ask them about it. So he hurried down to the Green Forest. Unc' Billy Possum was sitting in the doorway of his home in the big hollow tree.

Peter could hardly wait to say good morning before he plunged into the story of Johnny Chuck's trouble. Unc' Billy listened gravely. When Peter told him of his plan to go up to Farmer Brown's yard to look for the baby Chuck, Unc' Billy's eyes twinkled.

"Ah haven't fo'gotten how yo' found and brought home mah baby Possum when he was lost, Brer Rabbit.¹⁸ Besides, Ah cert'nly do think a great deal of Brer Chuck. Ah cert'nly do think a great deal of Brer Chuck. Ah'm gwine to help yo'."

"Will you, Unc' Billy? Will you? That will be splendid," cried Peter, hopping up and down joyfully.

Just then Jimmy Skunk happened along and Peter told the story all over again. When he had finished Jimmy Skunk scratched his head thoughtfully.

"I'm very fond of Johnny Chuck," said he. "More than that I owe him a good turn, for he gave me his old house, and a very fine house it is. I always try to pay my debts, so I'll help too."

Then Johnny Chuck's three little friends put their heads together and planned what they would do to find out what had become of the baby Chuck. It was agreed that Peter Rabbit should try first. If he didn't succeed Jimmy Skunk would try, and if Jimmy failed Unc' Billy Possum would try. Finally Peter Rabbit once more started for the dear old briar patch to wait for the next day, when he would prove how brave he could be.

STORY 372. April 23, 1913

The Bravery of Peter Rabbit.

Peter Rabbit had been hiding under the henhouse just outside of Farmer Brown's dooryard ever since the black, black night had begun to give way to the glad, bright day. You see, he wouldn't have dared to go up there in daylight, for fear that someone would see him. So he had gone there in the night, for Peter is one of those whose eyes are made for seeing in either night or day. He had found the hole under the henhouse just where Jimmy Skunk had told him he would find it, and he had crept in and made himself as comfortable as he could. Now he was waiting and waiting for jolly, round, red Mr. Sun to climb up to the blue, blue sky so that everybody at Farmer Brown's would wake up.

Little rays of light crept under the henhouse. A rooster crowed and made Peter jump almost out of his skin. He had heard roosters crow before, but always at a distance. This one was almost over his head and it startled him so that he almost squealed with fright. Pretty soon he heard the hens jump down from the perches, and with every jump Peter's heart jumped too. Then he heard Bowser the Hound yawn and rattle his chain. Peter peeped through a little crack, and there was Bowser stretching himself in front of his little house, and so near that it seemed to Peter that Bowser must surely smell him.

18 STORY 155, 1912.

A door slammed and in a few moments Peter heard footsteps. Then he heard the voice of Farmer Brown's boy as he stopped to talk to Bowser the Hound. Then the footsteps drew nearer and thumped on the floor over Peter's head. Farmer Brown's boy was collecting the eggs. Poor Peter Rabbit! He tried to tell himself that it was foolish to be afraid. Nobody knew that he was under the henhouse, and so, of course, there was nothing to be afraid of. But somehow, he just couldn't help being afraid. Every sudden sound made him jump almost out of his skin. You see he never before was quite so close to Farmer Brown's house, and he couldn't help but feel that Farmer Brown's boy and Bowser the Hound must know that he was there and be watching for him. He longed to crawl out the way he had come in and trust to his long legs to take him safely to the Green Forest. But every time he thought of this, he shut his lips tightly and tried to forget that that he could run.

The bravest folks are those whose hearts
Go pit-a-pat with fear,
But still I refuse to run away
From danger drawing near.
He's twice as brave who does a deed
He is afraid to do
As he who does a mightier act
Yet says no fear he knew.

So, though Peter Rabbit was shaking with fear so that his teeth chattered, he really was very very brave, for, you see, he could have run away and didn't. And it was all because he had promised Johnny Chuck to try to find out what had become of Johnny's baby Chuck, whom Farmer Brown's boy had caught and carried off. So, in spite of all his shaking and jumping Peter's bravery was the very bravest kind of bravery.

Peter found that he couldn't see much of the dooryard from under the henhouse. He could see a big woodpile that looked as if it might have hiding places. He would try it anyway. So when the way seemed clear he crept out and hurried over to the woodpile.

Before he had a chance to hunt for a hiding place Bowser the Hound came out of his house and saw Peter. "Bow, wow, wow!" roared Bowser, and pulled at his chain so that it seemed as if it must break. Peter didn't stop to look for a hiding place under the woodpile. He saw an opening under the porch of Farmer Brown's house and he dived in head first.

Hardly had Peter congratulated himself on his new hiding place when he heard a low growl. Peter looked over in the darkest corner and his heart almost stopped beating. There were two fierce greenish eyes glaring at him. It was Thomas, the big cat of Farmer Brown. Peter didn't wait to look twice. He left by the same way he had entered.

STORY 373. April 24, 1913

Jimmy Skunk has Hard Luck.

When Peter Rabbit dodged out from under Farmer Brown's porch with Thomas the cat at his heels, he was so frightened that at first he didn't look to see where he was going and so almost ran right into Farmer Brown's boy. He dodged just in time and ran three times around the dooryard looking for a place to hide while Farmer Brown's boy chased him and Bowser the Hound barked. But frightened as he was, and he was terribly frightened—yes, sir, he was terribly frightened—he didn't forget to look with eyes open for some sign of Johnny Chuck's lost baby whom Farmer Brown's boy had carried away.

At last Peter found a hole in the wire fence and slipped through into the old orchard. How he did run. He stopped just long enough in the far corner to tell Johnny Chuck the sad news that he had seen, nothing of the lost baby, and then he kept on as fast as he could go to the dear, safe, old briar patch. He found Jimmy Skunk waiting just outside to learn what Peter had found out. Peter told Jimmy all about his terrible adventures and how they had been for nothing, for, you see, he had found out nothing.

Jimmy Skunk laughed. You see he isn't afraid of much of anything, not even Farmer Brown's boy when the latter hasn't got his terrible gun with him. "I'll see what I can find out tomorrow," said Jimmy, as he started for his home, which, you remember, used to be the home of Johnny Chuck.

When night came Jimmy Skunk started for Farmer Brown's. He had been there so often to steal eggs that he knew all about Farmer Brown's dooryard and just where every hiding place was. First, he went to the henhouse and helped himself to a good dinner of fresh eggs. Then he started out to explore Farmer Brown's dooryard. He took his time, for Jimmy Skunk never hurries. He even went right up on the doorstep. You see it was dark, and there was no one about to see him. He hunted everywhere—among the chicken coops, around the house, the barn, and in all the sheds, but nothing of the lost baby Chuck could he find.

"If he's here at all he must be inside the house or barn," said Jimmy to himself. "I'll wait until morning and see if he comes out to play. I can take a nice little nap under the porch while I'm waiting."

Now, if Jimmy Skunk had gone straight over to the porch and crept under for his nap he probably wouldn't have gotten into trouble. But Jimmy Skunk likes to poke his nose into everything, and is always looking for something new to eat. Out in the yard he found a can which had been thrown there that day. It was a can from which the corn that Farmer Brown had had for his dinner had been taken, and there was just a wee bit of the corn sticking to the sides of the can. Jimmy Skunk sniffed at it. It smelled good. It made Jimmy's mouth water.

He put in one little black hand and scraped out what bits of corn he could. They tasted like more. Jimmy tried to put his head in to lick up the sweet corn milk. It was hard work, but finally his head slipped in and he had soon licked the inside of the can clean. Then he tried to back out, but he couldn't back out. He grabbed the can with his hands and tried pull his head out, but the can stuck tight. He couldn't move it a bit. The sharp edges of the can caught behind his ears and held fast. For once in his life Jimmy Skunk was frightened. Yes, sir, Jimmy Skunk was badly frightened. Indeed, he was so

frightened that he quite lost his usual good sense. He tried once more to back out. He ran backward and of course took the can with him. Bump! Jimmy had landed against the side of Bowser the Hound's little house. Of course Bowser waked and came out with a roar that frightened Jimmy almost to death. Fortunately, Bowser was chained and Jimmy backed out of reach.

It seemed as if Jimmy managed to back into everything in Farmer Brown's dooryard. He upset two big milk cans. He knocked over a pile of flower pots. He bumped into the chicken coops and the henhouse and a wagon, and all the time Bowser the Hound was making a terrible noise. Jimmy Skunk certainly was in hard luck.

STORY 374. April 25, 1913

Jimmy Skunk Has a Narrow Escape.

"Whatever shall I do? Whatever shall I do?" said Jimmy Skunk over and over again to himself as he backed into this thing and backed into that thing in Farmer Brown's dooryard. "O, dear, whatever shall I do?"

You see, Jimmy had put his head into an empty can and now he couldn't get it out again. He had tried to pull the dreadful can off, and when he couldn't do that, he tried to back out of it because he couldn't think of anything else to do. Of course, he took the can right along with him. The fact is, Jimmy Skunk had become so frightened that he had lost his wits altogether. Yes, sir; Jimmy Skunk had lost his wits. He just couldn't think. If he had thought a little, he would have known that backing around as he was doing was the most foolish thing he could do. It was bound to get him into worse trouble.

When fear comes in and wits go out
One seldom knows what one's about.

And so it was with Jimmy Skunk. If any of his friends could have seen him, they would hardly have known what to make of him. You see, Jimmy Skunk is seldom afraid of anybody or anything. He used to laugh at Peter Rabbit for being so easily frightened and once in a while Jimmy had boasted that he didn't know what fear was. But he knew now! Yes, sir, Jimmy Skunk knew now what fear is. He had waked Bowser the Hound and Bowser was tugging at his chain and making a terrible noise. Then Jimmy had added to the noise by upsetting some milk cans and a lot of flower pots and some other things. The hens had been wakened in the henhouse, and now they were making a terrible fuss. Surely all this noise would bring Farmer Brown's boy to find out what it meant, and then Jimmy didn't think any farther than that. He just ran backward faster than ever.

"O, dear! If only I could get under something!" moaned Jimmy.

"Bow, wow, wow, wow! Bow, wow, wow, wow!" roared Bowser the Hound.

"Cut, cut, cut, cut! Help! Help!" shrieked the frightened hens.

Jimmy heard the back door of Farmer Brown's house open, and then he heard

footsteps hurrying toward the henhouse. It was Farmer Brown's boy. In one hand he held a gun and in the other he carried a lantern. Jimmy Skunk didn't know that, because, of course, he couldn't see on account of the can over his head. But if he couldn't see he could hear.

"A skunk!" exclaimed Farmer Brown's boy, as he saw right away the shells of the eggs Jimmy Skunk had sucked early in the evening. "He cannot be very far away: I'll look around a bit."

All this time Jimmy Skunk had kept still, but when he heard those dreadful footsteps drawing near, he couldn't keep still any longer and he began to back more frantically than ever. Of course, Farmer Brown's boy saw him right away. He put down his lantern and lifted his gun to shoot. Then he put his gun down again to laugh. You see it really was very funny to see Jimmy trying to back out of something which was fast to his own head.

"Ho, ho, ho!" laughed Farmer Brown's boy. That's a new kind of a trap! I won't waste a shot on you. Mr. Skunk, because a club will do just as well."

While Farmer Brown's boy looked for a club Jimmy backed around faster than ever. Bang he went against the back porch. Then Jimmy remembered something. There was a hole under that porch, the very hole into which Peter Rabbit had dived the day before. Jimmy felt along until he found it and then backed in. "Now I'll be safe," thought Jimmy, as he squeezed through. Alas! Jimmy had forgotten the can on his head! The hole wasn't big enough for the can to go through.

In the meantime, Farmer Brown's boy had found a club. He saw Jimmy disappearing under the porch and he rushed up and grabbed the can to pull Jimmy out. Jimmy Skunk braced himself under the porch and pulled and outside Farmer Brown's boy held to the can and pulled. It seemed to Jimmy as if his head would be pulled off. Then suddenly Jimmy fell over flat on his back under the porch and Farmer Brown's boy fell flat on his back outside. The can had come off!

STORY 375. April 26, 1913

Unc' Billy Possum Takes His Turn.

Peter Rabbit had tried to find out what had become of Johnny Chuck's lost baby, carried away by Farmer Brown's boy, and had found out nothing except that Farmer Brown's door yard is no place for a rabbit who is timid. Jimmy Skunk had tried and had found out only that it never pays to put one's head into a strange place without first making sure that you can withdraw it again. In fact, Jimmy was nursing a very sore head and neck because he had put his head into an empty corn can, and then had had a terrible time getting the can off. So now it was Unc' Billy Possum's turn to see what he could find out about that missing little Chuck.

Now Unc' Billy Possum is as sharp as his sharp little old face. He had listened to all that Peter Rabbit told him of his adventures, and he had listened to Jimmy Skunk's tale of woe, and he had made up his mind. Yes, sir, Unc' Billy had made up his mind.

“That li’l Chuck isn’t kept anywhere out in Farmer Brown’s dooryard,” said Unc’ Billy to himself as he thought it all over. “He isn’t kept in the henhouse, fo’ Jimmy Skunk would have found him when he was looking fo’ eggs. It must be that he is kept in Farmer Brown’s house or in the barn. Ah cert’nly can’t go in the house, but Ah reckon Ah can get in the barn.”

Late that night when he was sure that everybody at Farmer Brown’s was asleep, including Bowser the Hound, Unc’ Billy Possum came out of the Green Forest and stole past Farmer Brown’s henhouse toward the barn. Once he stopped and looked hard at the henhouse, while his mouth ran water and he smacked his lips. Then he shook his head and plodded on.

“No, sah!” said Unc’ Billy, talking to himself, “Yo’ ain’t any business thinking of your stomach no how. Yo’ am looking fo’ a li’l’ stolen baby Chuck and yo’ just keep right on a-looking and forget all about those nice fresh eggs.”

And Unc’ Billy did keep on. Yes, sir, he kept right on over to the big barn. That shows how much he thought of Johnny Chuck, for there is nothing so tempting to Unc’ Billy Possum as nice fresh eggs. Unc’ Billy had never been over to the barn before. He poked around outside and then he crawled underneath. By and by he found a hole in the floor and he crept up through it. He was in the barn at last.

Unc’ Billy had never been in a big barn before and it gave him a funny feeling down inside. He wasn’t exactly afraid. He just felt queer because it was all so strange. He could hear the horses and cows breathing and once a horse stamped and startled Unc’ Billy so that his teeth chattered. But Unc’ Billy Possum never wastes time with foolish fears. That big barn was a very interesting place. In fact it was so interesting that he almost forgot what had brought him there. He poked around here and he poked around there. By and by he came to a box covered with wire netting. Unc’ Billy peeped inside, for you know he can see in the dark. Then he grinned, for there curled up in some hay was the lost baby Chuck fast asleep.

“Ah reckoned Ah would find him,” said Unc’ Billy. “And now Ah reckon Ah will go look fo’ some eggs.”

STORY 376. April 28, 1913

Unc’ Billy Possum Has a Good Time

Unc’ Billy Possum felt very much pleased with himself, very much pleased indeed. He had found Johnny Chuck’s lost baby after Peter Rabbit and Jimmy Skunk had failed. It tickled Unc’ Billy just to think of how he would carry the news to Johnny Chuck, for you see, Unc’ Billy had once lost one of his own babies¹⁹ and he knew just what that terrible ache in Johnny Chuck’s heart was like. So Unc’ Billy grinned happily as he peeped between the wires that covered the box in which the baby Chuck lay fast asleep in Farmer Brown’s big barn.

At first Unc’ Billy thought he would waken the little Chuck and ask him all about

19 STORY 138, 1912

Illustrations. April 21 to April 26, 1913.



370. Peter Rabbit Comforts Johnny Chuck



371. Johnny Chuck's Three Friends



372. The Bravery of Peter Rabbit



373. Jimmy Skunk has Hard Luck



374. Jimmy Skunk Has a Narrow Escape



375. Unc' Billy Possum Takes His Turn

how he was treated by Farmer Brown's boy. Then he happened to think that the baby Chuck had never seen him and didn't know who he was. Perhaps he would be terribly frightened if waked up in the night that way by a stranger.

"Ah don' want to frighten the li'l' pickaninny; Ah'll just wait a while and perhaps he'll wake himself," said Unc' Billy.

Perhaps if the whole truth were known Unc' Billy was only too glad of some excuse for staying a while in Farmer Brown's big barn. He had never been inside of it before, and it seemed to be full of interesting things and hiding places.

"Ah reckon Ah'll peer 'round a right smart bit and make mahself acquainted," muttered Unc' Billy.

First he examined all the boxes and barrels he could find. There was nothing to eat in any of them, but some of them did have the most lovely smells—smells of the different kinds of apples that they had held. Unc' Billy sniffed and sniffed and sniffed till water began to trickle down from the corners of his mouth. You see, Unc' Billy is very fond of apples, and he hadn't had one for a long time.

"Mah goodness! exclaimed Unc' Billy, "Ah can't find anything here but appetite, and Ah already has mo'n Ah really wants of that! If Ah smells apples much longer Ah just naturally got to eat eggs. Yes, sah, Ah got to eat eggs, if Ah can't have apples."

With that Unc' Billy started to climb up into the hay mow. Not that Unc' Billy expected to find eggs up there. Oh, my, no! Such a thought never entered his head. He went up there just to see what kind of a place it was.

"Plumb full of hiding places!" chuckled Unc' Billy, as he crawled along a beam. Just then his sharp eyes saw something white down in the hay right underneath him. Unc' Billy leaned over until he almost lost his balance. When he finally looked up he was grinning broadly and his eyes were half closed from pure happiness. "It's an egg. It sho'ly is an egg," he sighed, and straightway started back along the beam to find a way down to the hay.

"Ah hope this barn is plumb full of eggs," murmured Unc' Billy.

And so it is, go where we will,
We cannot learn to be content.
One blessing seized, a greater still
We think must surely have been sent.

STORY 377. April 29, 1913

What a Sneeze Did

"Big oaks from little acorns grow."
That's just as true as true can be;
A little word, a little deed
May change the life of you or me.

It was a very little thing that got Unc' Billy Possum into a lot of trouble. Yes, sir, it was a very little thing. It was nothing but a sneeze, a very little sneeze, just such a sneeze as Unc' Billy had sneezed a great many times. It seemed like a perfectly harmless little sneeze. It was harmless in itself. It was like a great many other things, perfectly right and proper in the right place, but full of trouble out of place.

You see Unc' Billy Possum was in the haymow of Farmer Brown's big barn. He hadn't any business there. Of course not. He had come in there on a kindly errand—to try to find Johnny Chuck's lost baby. He had found him in a wire-covered box, perfectly well and fast asleep. Of course Unc' Billy should have gone straight back to the Green Forest as soon as he found this out and there waited for daylight so as to go up to the old orchard and tell Johnny Chuck the good news.

But Unc' Billy didn't. No, sir, Unc' Billy didn't. He just had to prowl around that big barn and stick his sharp little nose into a lot of things which really were not in the least his business. You see Unc' Billy had quite as much curiosity as Peter Rabbit ever dreamed of having.

Prowling around up in the haymow Unc' Billy found something that made him grin from ear to ear. What was it? Why, it was a hen's nest, and in it were five eggs. Yes, sir, Unc' Billy counted five eggs. Now, of course, Unc' Billy had no business to touch those eggs, but then, as Unc' Billy said to himself, Mrs. Speckles had no business to have hidden them up there instead of laying them in the nice nest Farmer Brown's boy had prepared for her in the henhouse. So Unc' Billy just helped himself to those eggs. Yes, sir, he ate all five of those eggs, and he chuckled all the time he was eating them. Then what do you think Unc' Billy did? Why, he curled himself up in that nest and took a nap. You see that nest was hidden away in a dark corner of the haymow and the hay was warm and soft and oh, so comfortable! Unc' Billy was asleep in two winks and dreaming the most beautiful dreams.

A great noise waked Unc' Billy. There was shouting and stamping and rattling. For a minute he couldn't think where he was. Then he remembered. He had slept longer than he had meant to and here it was broad daylight and Farmer Brown's boy was giving the horses their breakfast.

"Ah reckon it wouldn't be safe fo' me to go home now, because somebody would sho'ly see me," said Unc' Billy "But nobody's gwine to find me up here." He stretched himself, yawned noiselessly, then curled himself up once more for another nap.

He was almost asleep when he heard something that made his eyes fly wide open. Could it be? Yes, it was! Farmer Brown's boy was climbing up to the haymow! Unc' Billy held his breath. What was Farmer Brown's boy coming up there for? In a minute he knew. It was just to get hay for the horses. Unc' Billy smiled with relief. Suddenly Unc' Billy clapped both hands to his nose. In pitching down the hay Farmer Brown's boy had raised a great dust. It had gone up Unc' Billy's nose. "Kerchoo!" went Unc' Billy before he could stop it. Farmer Brown's boy suddenly stopped work and stood perfectly still. He was listening.

The tickling in Unc' Billy's nose grew worse. He held his nose with both hands.

He tried to hold his breath. It was of no use. “Kerchoo!” went Unc’ Billy once more.

“Ha!” cried Farmer Brown’s boy, and started straight for the corner where Unc’ Billy was hiding.

STORY 378. April 30, 1913

Unc’ Billy Possum Tries an Old Trick

Just a little smothered sneeze;
Just a little faint “kerchoo!”
Nothing much but quite too much
As Uncle Billy Possum knew.

That little sneeze was just like a lot of little deeds, good and bad; it wasn’t much in itself, but oh, my, my, what a lot came from it. Of course, if Unc’ Billy hadn’t been up in the haymow of Farmer Brown’s barn where he had no business to be it wouldn’t have happened, because the dust from the hay wouldn’t have gotten up his nose when Farmer Brown’s boy threw the hay down to the horses as he does every morning. If,—my, my, my what a great big little word that “if” is! If Unc’ Billy hadn’t sneezed just when he did there wouldn’t be any story tonight.

But Unc’ Billy was there and Unc’. Billy did sneeze and a lot of things happened. They began to happen right away. Farmer Brown’s boy heard that sneeze. He knew right away that someone who had no business there was hiding in the hay, and he began to look, holding his pitchfork all ready to strike. Now Unc’ Billy is very smart, very smart, indeed, in some ways. There is nobody who can get himself into more trouble and then get himself out again than Unc’ Billy Possum. Some folks are smart enough to keep out of trouble, but it takes even greater smartness to get out of trouble after you have once gotten in. And that’s the kind of smartness Unc’ Billy has. Some people think him stupid. But that just shows how smart he really is—he is smart enough to make folks think him stupid.

Now, almost any of the other little meadow or forest people would have run the minute they heard Farmer Brown’s boy coming. They would have been so frightened that they would have tried to get away, and that would have been the end of them, for Farmer Brown’s boy would have struck with that wicked looking pitchfork. What did Unc’ Billy do? He just lay perfectly still and held his breath. He was just as much frightened as any of the other little meadow or forest people would have been, but he was smart enough to know that if he didn’t move perhaps Farmer Brown’s boy wouldn’t see him up there in that dark corner.

But Farmer Brown’s boy did see him. “Ho!” he cried. “So there’s the thief who has been stealing the eggs from the henhouse!” and he lifted his pitchfork ready to strike. But Unc’ Billy didn’t move, not so much as an eyelash. Instead of striking with the pitchfork Farmer Brown’s boy reached forward and suddenly grabbed Unc’ Billy by the back of his neck.

Did Unc’ Billy struggle and kick and try to use his sharp teeth? No, siree! That

shows how smart he is. He just hung there as limp as if there wasn't a spark of life in him. Unc' Billy was trying an old trick; he was making believe that he was dead. Farmer Brown's boy held him out at arm's length and chuckled.

"Ho, ho, ho! You can't fool me, Mr. Possum! You did it once²⁰, but you can't do it again!" he cried. Then he took Unc' Billy by the tail and climbed down from the haymow. And still Unc' Billy Possum showed no signs or life. He looked just as dead as a dead possum could look.

STORY 379. May 1, 1913

Unc' Billy Possum Comes to Life.

The smartest folks will sometimes find,
That other folks are quite as smart,
And so their little tricks all fail—
They simply play a foolish part.

Unc' Billy Possum was beginning to have an idea that that was just the case with him. When Farmer Brown's boy found him up in the haymow, Unc' Billy just pretended that he was dead. Yes, sir, he pretended that he was dead. He didn't move so much as an eyelash when Farmer Brown's boy picked him up by the back of the neck. He hung as limp as if there wasn't a breath of life in him when Farmer Brown's boy swung him by the tail and climbed down from the haymow with him. When Farmer Brown's boy dropped him with a thump on the barn floor Unc' Billy didn't even grunt, though he wanted to, for it shook him all over. But he didn't. He lay perfectly still just as he fell. Farmer Brown's boy pinched Unc' Billy's tail, pinched it hard. It hurt dreadfully, but still Unc' Billy didn't move.

By and by Farmer Brown's boy pretended to go away, leaving Unc' Billy on the barn floor. What he really did was to hide behind some barrels close by, where he could watch Unc' Billy. After everything had been perfectly still for a long time Unc' Billy very, very slowly opened one of his sharp eyes. He didn't open it wide, but just so that he could peep out from under the lids. He could see those barrels, and sticking out from behind one of them something that looked to him very much like the toe of a shoe. Unc' Billy slowly closed his eye again and inside he grinned.

"Yo' don't catch this possum that way, Mistah Boy!" said he to himself, and took care not to move.

Finally Farmer Brown's boy gave up. He came out from behind the barrels, and his freckled face wore a broad grin as he stood looking down at Unc' Billy.

"You certainly are a smart old possum, but you are just fooling yourself if you think you are fooling me," said he. "You're just as much alive as you was when you sucked those eggs up there in the hay. I'll just have Bowser watch you while I fix a place to keep you. No, sir; you can't fool me for a minute, Mr. Possum! You did it once a long time ago, but your little trick won't work this time."

Then he whistled for Bowser the Hound and told him to watch Unc' Billy, but not to touch him unless Unc' Billy tried to get away. Bowser sniffed at Unc' Billy and growled way down in his throat in a way to send a queer prickly feeling all over Unc' Billy. Then he sat down close to Unc' Billy, while Farmer Brown's boy went away. Unc' Billy didn't move. You see, Bowser the Hound kept growling deep down in his throat.

After what seemed to Unc' Billy, a very long time, Farmer Brown's boy came back bringing a wire-covered box. It was just like the one in which Johnny Chuck's lost baby was a prisoner. Farmer Brown's boy picked Unc' Billy up by the tail and dropped him into the box and fastened the little door through which he had dropped him. Then Unc' Billy came to life. You see, he knew then that it was of no use to pretend any longer that he was dead. So he yawned and stretched and sat up.

Farmer Brown's boy laughed.

STORY 380. May 2, 1913

Sammy Jay Feels Sorry.

Sammy Jay had just come up to the old orchard from the Green Forest. Sammy had something on his mind. Yes, sir, Sammy Jay had something on his mind. He was feeling sorry. It was a queer feeling for Sammy Jay. He couldn't remember ever having had it before. He tried to think that he hadn't got it now, but it was of no use. He couldn't fool himself. For once in his life he really was sorry for something he had done.

You see Sammy had just come up past the great hollow tree where Unc' Billy Possum had made his home. Unc' Billy wasn't there. He hadn't been there for a number of days. Old Mrs. Possum looked worried. She was sure that something had happened to Unc' Billy. She told Sammy Jay how Unc' Billy had gone up to Farmer Brown's to try to find out what had become of Johnny Chuck's baby Chuck whom Farmer Brown's boy had carried away. Now as Sammy Jay sat in one of the old apple trees in the old orchard he could see Johnny Chuck sitting on the doorstep and looking and looking in the direction of Farmer Brown's house toward which his baby Chuck had been carried. He just sat and looked and looked and looked and hardly noticed Polly Chuck or the two little Chucks who hadn't been caught.

Try as he would Sammy Jay couldn't keep Johnny Chuck and Unc' Billy Possum out of his mind. He knew that if it hadn't been for him Farmer Brown's boy might never have found the baby Chuck, and if he hadn't why Unc' Billy Possum would never have gone to look for him, and if—well, the more he thought the bigger grew that little "if." It was no use to think of what might have been. The thing to do was to think of what was and how he could try to undo the mischief he had done when he showed Farmer Brown's boy and Bowser the Hound where Johnny Chuck's house was. That was where all the trouble started.

"I—I wish I hadn't." said Sammy to himself as he sat in the old apple tree.

It always was and will be so—
It cannot help but be, you know;
An unkind deed, though big or small,
Once done is done beyond recall.

Sammy Jay was beginning to realize this now. It didn't do the teeniest weeniest bit of good to wish that he hadn't done it. He had, and all the wishing in the world wouldn't make it any different. The baby Chuck was gone and Unc' Billy Possum was gone, and no one in the Green Forest or on the Green Meadows knew if they were dead or alive. Suddenly Sammy Jay shut his bill with a snap.

"I'll go up there myself," said he.

Sammy didn't waste any time once he had made up his mind. He wasn't much afraid. You see he knew that at this time of year Farmer Brown's boy was not likely to have his dreadful gun with him. Besides he could watch until Farmer Brown and his boy had gone down to the cornfield. This is just what he did do. As soon as they were well on their way Sammy flew over to a tree that grew right in Farmer Brown's dooryard. Sammy looked this way and that way all over the dooryard, but he didn't see anything that he hadn't seen before when he had been there.

Then he just happened to look down. Sammy just stared with his eyes and his mouth stretched its very widest, he was so surprised. What was it? Why Sammy Jay was looking right down into wire-covered boxes and in one the lost little Chuck was contentedly eating his breakfast of tender young clover. While in the other, all curled up for a morning nap, lay Unc' Billy Possum.

"I'm so glad, so glad that, they're alive!" screamed Sammy Jay.

STORY 381. May 3, 1913

Sammy Jay Spreads the News.

When Sammy Jay looked down from the tree in Farmer Brown's dooryard and saw Unc' Billy Possum curled up asleep in a wire-covered box, and in another box just like it the lost baby of Johnny Chuck eating sweet, tender young clover, Sammy just screamed. Yes, sir, he just screamed, and it was because he was so delighted to find Unc' Billy and the little Chuck alive. He screamed so loud that he waked Unc' Billy.

Unc' Billy 'Possum knew that voice and he began to grin even before he got his eyes open. When he did get them open and looked up he grinned more broadly than ever. Sammy Jay flew down to the lowest branch of the tree.

"What are you doing there, Unc' Billy Possum? Why don't you go home instead of letting Mrs Possum worry herself almost sick because she doesn't know what has become of you?" he demanded.

Unc' Billy grinned more than ever. "If yo' will be so kind as to show me how Ah's gwine to get out, Brer Jay, Ah cert'nly will go home right smart quick," said he. "Ah's

getting powerful homesick mahself.”

Sammy Jay looked foolish. If he had stopped to think he would have known at once that Unc’ Billy was a prisoner.

“What—what can I do for you, Unc’ Billy?” asked Sammy. “Isn’t there something I can do for you?”

Unc’ Billy scratched his head thoughtfully for a few minutes. “Yo’ might just drop ‘round by mah hollow tree in the Green Forest and tell ol’ Mrs Possum where her ol’ man is, Brer Jay, and why he doesn’t come home,” said he. “Tell her that she needn’t worry, because Ah has enough to eat and drink and someday, somehow, Ah done gwine to get out of here, and then Ah’ll come home right smart.

And yo’ might just drop’ round to Johnny Chuck’s and tell him that his lost baby is safe and that Farmer Brown’s boy is treating him right nice. Johnny Chuck would like to know it.”

Sammy Jay nodded. Just then the back door of Farmer Brown’s house flew open and Mrs. Farmer Brown came out. She startled Sammy Jay so that he spread his wings and started for the Green Forest in a great hurry, but as he flew he screamed “I will! I will! I will!” at the top of his lungs, and Unc’ Billy gave a satisfied chuckle as he heard him.

Sammy Jay was as good as his word. He flew straight down to the far corner of the old orchard to Johnny Chuck’s house, and, just as he expected, there sat Johnny Chuck on his doorstep, mournfully and sadly looking over toward Farmer Brown’s house.

“He’s all right. Johnny Chuck! He’s all right!” shrieked Sammy Jay as soon as ever he was near enough to make Johnny Chuck hear.

Johnny Chuck started.

“Who’s all right?” he asked eagerly.

“Your lost baby,” replied Sammy Jay, and then hurried to tell all that he had found out. When he had finished, he started for the Green Forest to tell old Mrs. Possum, leaving Johnny Chuck feeling better than he had felt for long time. And when Sammy had told old Mrs. Possum where Unc’ Billy was he suddenly made up his mind that he would tell all the little meadow and forest people and perhaps some of them could think of a way to set Unc’ Billy and the baby Chuck free. And so he told Peter Rabbit and Jimmy Skunk and Danny Meadow Mouse and Happy Jack Squirrel and Billy Mink and Jerry Muskrat and everybody else whom he met, and soon all the little meadow and forest people knew what had become of Unc’ Billy Possum and the baby Chuck.

STORY 382. May 5, 1913

Jimmy Skunk Calls a Meeting.

Those friends are most your friends and best
Who prove it by the trouble test;

Who when old Trouble squeezes tight
Come to your side and help you fight.

That's the kind of a friend worth having and that's the kind of a friend Jimmy Skunk is. No sooner did he hear from Sammy Jay how Unc' Billy Possum had been caught than he forgot all about how he had gotten into trouble himself the last time he visited Farmer Brown's dooryard. Yes, sir, he forgot all about that! Unc' Billy was in trouble and that was enough to make Jimmy Skunk forget about his own troubles.

Jimmy asked Sammy Jay all kinds of questions, but Sammy couldn't tell him much because, you know, Sammy didn't know a great deal about how Unc' Billy had been caught. All he knew was that Unc' Billy was a prisoner in a wire-covered box under a tree in Farmer Brown's dooryard.

"You go back there and ask Unc' Billy what kind of a trap he was caught in and where it was set. Tell him I'm coming to see him tonight and I don't want to be caught, too. Now hurry and let me know what he says," said Jimmy.

So Sammy Jay flew back to Farmer Brown's dooryard and asked Unc' Billy just what Jimmy Skunk had told him to. Unc' Billy looked very foolish as he replied:

"Yo' tell Brer Skunk Ah was just caught napping. Yo' tell him that there are no traps, and it was mah own foolishness that brought me here. Tell him Ah'll be right glad fo' to have him make me a call."

So Sammy Jay flew back and told Jimmy Skunk just what Unc' Billy had said. Jimmy made up his mind right away. He would go up there just as soon as it was dark and he was sure that no one in Farmer Brown's house was likely to come poking around in the dooryard. And that is just what he did do. He didn't waste any time.

He crept past the little house of Bowser the Hound without waking him and went straight over to the tree in the dooryard. There under it were two wire covered boxes, just as Sammy Jay had said. Jimmy listened at the first one. Someone was asleep in that. Unc' Billy wouldn't be asleep at this hour, so it must be the baby Chuck. Jimmy hurried on to the second box.

"Unc' Billy!" he said in a loud whisper.

"Is that yo', Brer Skunk? Ah cert'nly am right glad to see you'," said Unc' Billy.

Jimmy Skunk climbed up on the box and then Unc' Billy told him all about his troubles and how it happened that Farmer Brown's boy had found and caught him. Jimmy listened without saying a word until Unc' Billy was through. Then he asked:

"How do you think you're ever going to get out of this dreadful fix, Unc' Billy?"

Unc' Billy shook his head sadly. "Ah doan know, Brer Skunk," said he. "Ah doan know. Sometimes Ah almost wishes Ah was daid, Ah do!"

"I have an idea!" exclaimed Jimmy Skunk. But he wouldn't tell Unc' Billy what that idea was. He merely wished him good night, and then hurried away. The next day

Illustrations. April 28 to May 3, 1913.



376.Unc' Billy Possum Has a Good Time



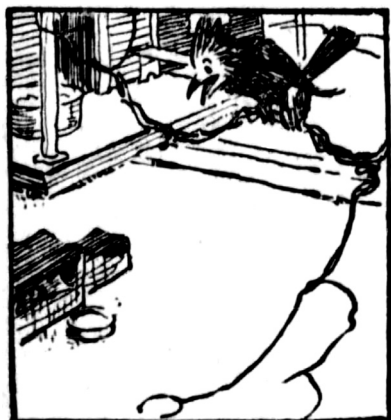
377.What a Sneeze Did



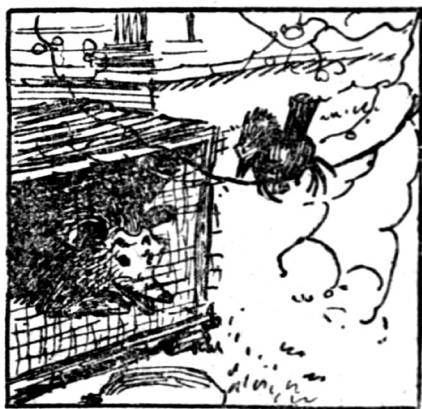
378.Unc' Billy Possum Tries an Old Trick



379.Unc' Billy Possum Comes to Life



380.Sammy Jay Feels Sorry



381.Sammy Jay Spreads the News

Jimmy Skunk called a meeting of all the little meadow and forest people to be held at sunset under the big hickory tree on the bank of the Smiling Pool.

STORY 383. May 6, 1913

The Meeting by the Smiling Pool.

Said Jimmy Skunk unto himself,
“What’s to be done’s worth doing well.”
And straightway did his very best
His plan to everyone to tell.

And so it was that nearly everyone who lives on the Green Meadows or in the Green Forest or around the Smiling Pool or along the Laughing Brook came at sundown at the big hickory tree on the bank of the Smiling Pool. Peter Rabbit was the first to arrive. You can always trust Peter to be on hand early when anything unusual is happening. Of course Jimmy Skunk was on hand early, for, you remember, it was Jimmy who had called the meeting. Happy Jack the Gray Squirrel, Chatterer the Red Squirrel, and Striped Chipmunk came together, scolding at each other all the way. Digger the Badger waddled over, Billy Mink, Jerry Muskrat and Little Joe Otter were on hand as usual, Danny Meadow Mouse and even timid little Whitefoot the Wood Mouse came. Reddy Fox was there, though the truth is he had not been invited, and it was suspected that the real reason of his coming was the hope that he would have a chance to catch one of the little folks on the way home.

Johnny Chuck wasn’t there. You see, it was a long way from the old orchard where Johnny lived now to the Smiling Pool and Johnny did not like to leave his home and Polly Chuck and the two little Chucks. The very last to arrive were Bobby Coon and Prickly Porky the porcupine, who were neighbors and came together. When Jimmy Skunk had counted noses and made sure that there were no more to come, he climbed up on an old log and made a speech. It was a very short speech, but it was enough. He told all about how Unc’ Billy Possum had been caught by Farmer Brown’s boy, and how he was a prisoner in a wire-covered box in Farmer Brown’s dooryard, and everybody looked at his nearest neighbor and said, “Too bad! Too bad!” You see, everybody, or nearly everybody, likes Unc’ Billy Possum.

Reddy Fox alone looked pleased and he tried to hide a smile of satisfaction behind one hand. You see, once upon a time Unc’ Billy Possum made Reddy Fox look very foolish in the eyes of all the other little meadow and forest people²¹. So Reddy was glad that Unc’ Billy was in trouble now, for Reddy Fox never forgets or forgives.

“Now, concluded Jimmy Skunk, “I’ve called this meeting to see if between us we cannot think of some way to help get Unc’ Billy Possum and the baby Chuck free.”

“Does the wire go all over the box?” inquired Happy Jack Squirrel.

“No,” replied Jimmy Skunk, “it only covers the top.”

“If it was only safe I might go up there in daytime and gnaw a hole through the

21 STORY 88, 1912

box,” said Happy Jack, thoughtfully. “But I wouldn’t dare up there by day, for I would surely be seen, and you know I can’t see very well at night. Besides, it would take me a long time to gnaw a hole big enough for Unc’ Billy to crawl through.”

Up spoke little Danny Meadow Mouse. “There’s the fellow to do the job!”

At the sound of Danny’s squeaky little voice everybody turned to look. He was pointing straight at—whom do you think? Why, Prickly Porky, the porcupine.

“Certainly, certainly! I’m just the fellow” said Prickly Porky be glad to do something for Unc’ Billy Possum.” You know Prickly Porky is as slow in his thinking as he is in his movements, and he never, never would have thought himself of a way to help Unc’ Billy out.

STORY 384. May 7, 1913

Reddy Fox Plans Trouble.

Reddy Fox was happy. There was no doubt about it. He chuckled as he lay taking a sun bath and thinking over his plans. It was those very plans that made him chuckle. And if you could have heard that chuckle you would have known by the very sound of it that it meant something unpleasant for someone else. And so it did. It meant something unpleasant for several if Reddy could carry out his plans.

Some folks are never quite so glad
As when they’re making others sad.

Reddy Fox is that kind. The more trouble he can bring to others the happier he seems to be. He was extra happy just now, because he thought he had a chance to bring trouble to several all at the same time, and they were the very ones he wanted to bring trouble to more than to any others of whom he could think. The more he thought over his plans the better they seemed, and the more he chuckled.

You see, it was this way: Reddy Fox had no love for Unc’ Billy Possum, because when Unc’ Billy first came to the Green Forest to live he had shamed Reddy before all the other little meadow and forest people²². And Reddy had no love for Prickly Porky, the Porcupine, because when Prickly Porky first came to the Green Forest he had proven Reddy Fox a boaster and a coward²³. And Reddy had no love for Jimmy Skunk, because only a little while ago Jimmy had prevented Reddy catching Peter Rabbit²⁴. Now here was a chance to get even with all three. To Reddy it seemed almost too good to be true.

Unc’ Billy Possum was in trouble already. Reddy had to smile every time he thought of it. He was a prisoner in a box in Farmer Brown’s dooryard. He couldn’t get away without help. Last night there had been a meeting of all the little meadow and forest people to plan some way of helping Unc’ Billy Possum. Reddy had not been invited to that meeting, but he had been there just the same, and so he knew all about

22 STORY 88, 1912.

23 STORY 49, 1912.

24 STORY 337, 1913.

the plan to help Unc' Billy get free.

In the darkest part of the next night Prickly Porky was to go up to Farmer Brown's dooryard, and with his great teeth he was to gnaw a hole in the box, so that Unc' Billy could crawl out. Jimmy Skunk was to go along and keep watch, so that if Farmer Brown or Farmer Brown's boy or anyone else should appear Prickly Porky would be warned in time to get out of sight.

It was a very nice plan. Everybody said so. Reddy chuckled as he thought of how he would upset it. He would wait until Prickly Porky had made the hole almost big enough to let Unc' Billy Possum out, and then he (Reddy Fox) would waken Farmer Brown's boy and bring him out in a hurry to see what was the matter. How would he do it? Why, easily enough. He would steal into the henhouse and frighten the chickens, so that they would make such a racket that Farmer Brown's boy would come rushing out with his dreadful gun. He would be almost sure to see either Jimmy Skunk or Prickly Porky, and then—well, anyway, they would get a dreadful scare, and Unc' Billy Possum wouldn't get away. It was a splendid plan. And the best of it was, there was no danger in it for himself.

STORY 385. May 8, 1913

What Happened in Farmer Brown's Dooryard

You sometimes cannot always tell,
No matter how you scheme and plan,
If things will turn out ill or well—
You just must do the best you can.

People who live that way, just doing the best they can every day and not worrying for fear that things will not come out just as they have planned, are called by a long name. They are called philosophers. Jimmy Skunk was a kind of philosopher. You see he planned everything as carefully as he could, and then he just made up his mind that he wouldn't worry. If he had really done all that he could do, why that was all he could do. The only thing was to make sure that he had done everything.

So Jimmy Skunk sat beside Prickly Porky, the porcupine, in the green forest, waiting for the black night shadows to grow blacker. When the darkness was at its very darkest they would steal up to Farmer Brown's dooryard and try their plan for setting Unc' Billy Possum free from the wire covered box in which Farmer Brown's boy was holding him a prisoner.

Not very far away some one else was watching and waiting. It was Reddy Fox. He had a plan, too. It wasn't to help Unc' Billy Possum. Oh, my, no! It was to upset Jimmy Skunk's plan, to keep Unc' Billy Possum a prisoner and to try to get Jimmy Skunk and Prickly Porky in trouble that Reddy Fox was watching and waiting. He was very impatient, was Reddy Fox. He couldn't sit still. You know that is quite likely to be the way with people who are planning mischief. He kept going to the edge of the Green Forest to peep out, and he moved about so much that Jimmy Skunk's sharp eyes saw

him.

“Ho!” said Jimmy Skunk, “Reddy Fox isn’t hanging around here for any good purpose. I’ll keep my eyes on him.”

When the night was its very darkest and all the lights in Farmer Brown’s house had winked out, Jimmy Skunk led the way up to Farmer Brown’s dooryard straight to the box where Unc’ Billy Possum was a prisoner. Unc’ Billy was wide awake and waiting. Prickly Porky didn’t waste any time. He just grunted a short “good evening” in reply to Unc’ Billy’s greeting and then got right down to work. Jimmy Skunk went off a little way where he could watch.

My, how Prickly Porky can gnaw when once he sets out to! Those big front teeth of his certainly can cut into the wood! It made Jimmy Skunk tickle all over to see the splinters fly from that box. “We’ll soon have Unc’ Billy out of there,” chuckled Jimmy as he kept watch.

Now, Jimmy Skunk is not so easy to fool, for all he seems so easy-going and even careless. He had made up his mind that Reddy Fox was hanging around for no good purpose, and so while he kept one eye on Farmer Brown’s house he kept the other open for Reddy Fox. So while Reddy thought himself so smart as he sneaked out of the Green Forest and kept in the darkest shadows Jimmy Skunk saw him and knew that he was up to mischief.

Reddy Fox had a very simple plan. He would slip into the henhouse and frighten the hens so that they would make a great noise, and that would bring Farmer Brown’s boy out with his gun. Reddy chuckled wickedly as he slipped into the henhouse and thought how he would be far away in the Green Forest by the time Farmer Brown’s boy could get out there, but that slow-moving Jimmy Skunk and Prickly Pork would be almost sure to be seen.

Just imagine how disappointed Reddy Fox was when he got inside the henhouse to find that all the hens were roosting so high that jump as he would he couldn’t frighten them a bit. No, sir; he couldn’t frighten them a bit. He tried his very best, but jump as he would he couldn’t get near enough to really frighten them, and they didn’t make noise enough to even waken Bowser the Hound.

Reddy Fox ground his teeth with rage as he slipped out of the henhouse. “Ha, ha, ha, Mr. Smarty!” chuckled some one. It was Jimmy Skunk.

Reddy was too angry to say anything; he just snarled. Then he had a happy thought. He would waken Bowser the Hound.

STORY 386. May 9, 1913

Farmer Brown’s Boy Has a Double Surprise.

Reddy Fox knew very well that Bowser the Hound was chained or he never would have dared go so near, for at heart Reddy Fox is a coward. But with Bowser chained Reddy had nothing to fear. He knew that if he could waken Bowser, that Bowser would

be almost sure to make a great racket, and that would bring Farmer Brown's boy out. That was all Reddy wanted, for that would upset the plan of Jimmy Skunk and Prickly Porky the porcupine, to set Unc' Billy Possum free from the box in which Farmer Brown's boy was keeping him a prisoner.

So Reddy stole right up to the very door of the little house in which Bowser the Hound was sleeping and barked sharply. He didn't need to but once. Bowser shook himself and scrambled out at once to the full length of his chain. He opened his big mouth to make a great noise and waken Farmer Brown's boy when something happened that made him close it again without making a sound, and do very strange thing—put his tail between his legs and crawl back into his house.

What do you think it was that happened? Why, Prickly Porky, who was gnawing a way out for Unc' Billy Possum, just rattled the thousand spears he carries. That was all. But it was enough for Bowser the Hound. He never had forgotten, and he never would forget, how some of those little spears which he had one time gotten in his mouth had hurt when his master had pulled them out²⁵. He didn't want anything more to do with them. If Prickly Porky was out there he would just stay inside and pretend that he hadn't waked up at all.

And this is how it happens that in spite of all, Reddy Fox could do nothing [that] happened to upset the plans of Jimmy Skunk and Prickly Porky. The great, sharp teeth of Prickly Porky soon made a big enough hole in the box in which Unc' Billy Possum was a prisoner for Unc' Billy to crawl through. Then Prickly Porky went to work on the box which held Johnny Chuck's baby Chuck, and soon there was a hole big enough for him to crawl out.

And then something queer happened. What do you think it was? Why, that baby Chuck wouldn't come out! No, sir; he wouldn't come out. Nothing that Jimmy Skunk or Prickly Porky or Unc' Billy Possum could say would tempt him to so much as put his nose outside. He said that he didn't know them, that he was afraid of the dark anyway, and that he was perfectly contented where he was. Finally the others gave it up, and just before day light they started for the Green Forest, Jimmy Skunk in the lead, then Unc' Billy Possum, and last of all Prickly Porky, with his thousand little spears rattling as he walked. Reddy Fox saw them and black anger filled his heart, for he had no love for any of them.

When in the morning Farmer Brown's boy went out to feed Unc' Billy Possum he gave a long whistle of surprise. At first he thought that Unc' Billy had gnawed his way out, but when he looked closer he saw that the gnawing had been from the outside, and then he was more puzzled then ever. Finally his sharp eyes saw something among the splinters on the ground.

"Ha, ha! So Prickly Porky is Mr. Possum's friend!" he exclaimed as he picked up one of Prickly Porky's little spears.

Just then he thought of the other box in which he had kept the baby Chuck. On the ground all around that lay splinters, too. Farmer Brown's boy really felt bad as he

25 STORY 46, 1912.

walked over to that box. He had grown to love the baby Chuck, to really love him. He looked into the box. Then he gave a start, rubbed his eyes and looked again. There was the baby Chuck just as usual! He hadn't run away in spite of the big hole inviting him to. Farmer Brown's boy didn't know which surprised him most—to discover that Unc' Billy Possum had escaped or to find the baby Chuck still there when he might have escaped.

STORY 387. May 10, 1913

The Baby Chuck Refuses to Go Home.

Jolly, round, red Mr. Sun, rubbing the sleepy-winks out of his eyes, smiled at what he saw very early that morning. Down the Lone Little Path marched Jimmy Skunk with his head held high and his big plump tail waving proudly. Behind him trotted Unc' Billy Possum, his coat as rough and tumbled as usual, his keen little eyes twinkling and his sharp little old face stretched in a broad grin which showed all his white teeth. Last of all came Prickly Porky the Porcupine, with a splinter of wood sticking out of one corner of his mouth like a toothpick, and rattling his thousand little spears.

Sammy Jay was the first to see them coming. He had hurried to the edge of the Green Forest at the very first hint of light. You see, Sammy knew all about how Jimmy Skunk and Prickly Porky were to try to set Unc' Billy Possum free from the wire-covered box in which Farmer Brown's boy had kept him a prisoner, and Sammy was dreadful anxious to know how they had succeeded. As soon as he saw Unc' Billy Possum he knew that they had succeeded, and he hurried to meet them so as to hear all about how it was done.

"I suppose you left the baby Chuck at Johnny Chuck's house on your way through the old orchard," said Sammy.

Instantly all three looked very grave.

"No," said Jimmy Skunk, slowly, "we didn't. We left him up in Farmer Brown's dooryard."

"What?" screamed Sammy Jay. "Didn't you set him free?" Jimmy Skunk and Prickly Porky and Unc' Billy Possum nodded their heads vigorously.

"Certainly we did!" replied Jimmy Skunk. "Certainly we did, but he just wouldn't come."

"Wouldn't come!" exclaimed Sammy Jay, as if he never had heard of such a thing. "Why, what under the sun was the matter with him?"

"I don't know," said Jimmy. "He just wouldn't come, and we couldn't make him. Who'll tell Johnny Chuck?"

Jimmy looked at Unc' Billy Possum, and Unc' Billy Possum looked at Prickly Porky, and then all three looked at Sammy Jay.

"You'll have to," said Jimmy Skunk. "It's getting broad daylight, and it wouldn't

do for any of us to go up to the old orchard in broad daylight. Of course Johnny Chuck is terribly anxious to know, so you'll have to go, Sammy Jay."

Of course the real reason none wanted to go was because they couldn't bear to break the news to Johnny Chuck that his lost baby refused to come home.

Sammy Jay made a face at Jimmy Skunk, and at first refused to go. Finally he said he would, and, because it was an unpleasant duty, he spread his wings and started for the old orchard at once. Of course Johnny Chuck wouldn't believe Sammy Jay when Sammy said that the baby Chuck refused to come home. Johnny said he didn't believe that Prickly Porky had tried to set him free, because no Chuck ever lived who would refuse to run away from such a prison as Farmer Brown's boy had made for that baby Chuck. No, sir, Johnny Chuck wouldn't believe Sammy Jay's story.

Johnny Chuck was so sure that Sammy's story couldn't be true that Sammy began to doubt it himself. To make sure he flew up to Farmer Brown's dooryard. There he saw something that made him gasp for breath. He thought his eyes must be playing him tricks. There sat the baby Chuck right on Farmer Brown's doorstep sucking milk from a bottle which Farmer Brown's boy was holding, and close by sat Bowser the Hound looking on and grinning as he wagged his tail.

Sammy Jay knew then that the baby Chuck never would come back—that he was a pet, and would rather live at Farmer Brown's than down in the old orchard.

"Poor Johnny Chuck," said Sammy Jay as he flew back with this astonishing news.

STORY 388. May 12, 1913

Johnny Chuck Goes Himself.

"I don't believe it," said Johnny Chuck.

"But I tell you it is so," insisted Sammy Jay. "I guess I can believe my own eyes. I tell you I saw your baby Chuck sitting on Farmer Brown's doorstep and drinking milk from a bottle held by Farmer Brown's boy."

Johnny Chuck stamped a foot impatiently and angrily. "Go home Sammy Jay! Go home!" he stormed, "Wasn't it bad enough to tell me that my baby had a chance to come home and wouldn't without adding such a story as this? Don't you suppose I feel badly enough without being made fun of in this way? Go home, Sammy Jay, You're bad!"

Sammy Jay's heart swelled with anger, and his eyes snapped. Here he had been trying to do Johnny Chuck a good turn by finding out for him what had become of his baby Chuck, who had been carried off by Farmer Brown's boy, and this was the thanks he got. You see Sammy had quite forgotten that people who have the name of being bad are seldom trusted, even when they are really trying to be good.

"It's no such thing. I'm not bad—not now, anyway," screamed Sammy. "I'll never, never try to help you again, Johnny Chuck, and I don't care now what happens to your

Illustrations. May 5 to May 10, 1913.



382.Jimmy Skunk Calls a Meeting



383.The Meeting by the Smiling Pool



384.Reddy Fox Plans Trouble



385.What Happened in Farmer Brown's Dooryard



386.Farmer Brown's Boy Has a Double Surprise



387.The Baby Chuck Refuses to Go Home

baby or whether he ever comes home or not. If you won't believe other people you better go see for yourself. You just don't dare to."

"I will!" shouted Johnny Chuck, as Sammy Jay flew off to the Green Forest to tell everyone he met about what he had seen at Farmer Brown's.

Of course Peter Rabbit was one of the first to hear the news. Late that afternoon he hurried up to the old orchard to hear what Johnny Chuck would say. Johnny was very glad, very glad, indeed, to see Peter.

"Oh, Peter Rabbit," he cried, "I'm going up to Farmer Brown's dooryard to find out what has become of my lost baby and—and—I don't know the way. Will you show me, Peter?"

Peter looked a little bit startled: "When are you thinking of going up there, Johnny Chuck?" he asked.

"At break of day tomorrow," replied Johnny, "just as soon as it's light enough to see."

Peter scratched his head thoughtfully. That was really the safest time to go, and Peter had great faith in his own long legs to take him to a safe place if there should be need. "I'll go," said he.

So the next morning when the first of the dark night shadows slipped away Peter Rabbit and Johnny Chuck stole out of the old orchard and up behind the woodpile in Farmer Brown's dooryard. Bowser the Hound was asleep. They could hear him snoring in his little house. They peeped out from behind the woodpile. Peter pointed out the box in which the baby Chuck was kept, then he sat up to watch while Johnny Chuck hurried over to the box. There he found the hole made by Prickly Porky, just as Sammy Jay had said. A little feeling of shame crept over Johnny Chuck as he remembered how he had refused to believe Sammy Jay.

Johnny Chuck put his nose in at the hole and called softly. "Go away," said a little sleepy cross voice.

"I've come to take you home," whispered Johnny Chuck.

"I don't want to go home; I like it here better," replied the baby Chuck.

Johnny Chuck just gasped. Could he really believe what he heard? Then the baby Chuck told him what a good time he was having, what good things he had to eat, how good Farmer Brown's boy was to him, how he could dig in the garden and do as he pleased, and how he had made friends with Bowser the Hound. "And so," concluded the baby Chuck, "I am going to stay right here." And nothing that Johnny Chuck could say made him change his mind.

Johnny Chuck and Peter Rabbit didn't say a word until they had reached the doorstep of Johnny Chuck's house in the far corner of the old orchard, but they were doing a lot of thinking.

"Perhaps," said Johnny Chuck as he bade Peter good by, "perhaps Farmer Brown's

boy isn't so bad after all."

"Perhaps he isn't," said Peter.

STORY 389. May 13, 1913

Discontent of Peter Rabbit.

You remember that it was discontent, nothing but discontent, that was at the bottom of all that had happened to Johnny Chuck. If Johnny hadn't suddenly become discontented with his old home on the Green Meadows he never would have left it. And if he hadn't left it he never would have met Polly Chuck, and, of course, there never would have been that nice new house in a corner of Farmer Brown's old orchard, nor the baby Chucks, nor any of the joys and worries which Johnny Chuck had known. They had all come from that discontent with his old home. And in spite of his sorrow over the lost baby Chuck and the worries he had every day over the two little Chucks still at home, Johnny felt that he never before in his life had known so much joy as since he had learned what love is. And so he was glad of the discontent which had driven him out into the world to find love.

So you see discontent, the right kind of discontent, sometimes leads to very much better things. Discontent which wants better things, but is not unhappy if they cannot be obtained, is really a good kind of discontent. But discontent which wants foolish things and is unhappy without them is—well, just listen to the story of Peter Rabbit's discontent and perhaps you will understand.

Peter Rabbit was discontented. Yes, sir, Peter Rabbit was discontented. Now that the excitement over the hunt for Johnny Chuck's lost baby was over, Peter had more time to think about himself. That was a bad thing for Peter. It is a bad thing for anyone to think too much about self, but it was especially bad for Peter Rabbit just then, because he didn't have much of anything else to think about. You see he had no family. He didn't have to build a new house. He didn't even have to hunt for his food, because in the beautiful spring time there is always plenty for Peter Rabbit to eat wherever he may be. Nobody wanted to gossip, because, you know, everybody else was very busy.

So Peter Rabbit sat in the dear old briar patch and wished this and wished that and wished the other thing until he grew so discontented that that he couldn't sit still. If you had asked him he couldn't have told you, to save his life, what the matter really was. Nothing was right. The sun was too bright or it wasn't bright enough. The dear old briar patch which had protected him so long was no kind of a place to live in. His legs were too long. His coat was the wrong color! He wanted to climb like Happy Jack Squirrel. He didn't see why he couldn't swim like Jerry Muskrat. Oh, dear, dear. Happy-go-lucky Peter Rabbit was in a terrible state of mind. Finally, the discontent all settled down to one thing and you never, never will guess what that was, it was such foolish thing to be discontented with.

It was his name. What do you think of that? Peter Rabbit was discontented with his name. He said it was too common. Peter had yet to learn what you and I long ago

learned—that

Every day in every year
The common things are those most dear—
The air we breathe, the good plain bread.
The sleep we seek each night in bed.
Go where you will, go east or west,
You'll find that common things are best.

STORY 390. May 14, 1913

Peter Rabbit Decides to Change His Name

Peter Rabbit! Peter Rabbit! I don't see what Mother Nature ever gave me such a common sounding name as that for. People laugh at me, but if I had a fine sounding name they wouldn't laugh. Some folks say that a name doesn't amount to anything, but it does. If I should do some wonderful thing, nobody would think anything of it. No, sir, nobody would think anything of it at all just because—why, just because it was done by Peter Rabbit.”

Peter was talking out loud, but he was talking to himself. He sat in the dear old briar patch with an ugly scowl on his usually happy face. The sun was shining, the Merry Little Breezes of Old Mother West Wind were dancing over the Green Meadows, the birds were singing, and happiness, the glad, joyous happiness of spring time, was everywhere but in Peter Rabbit's heart. There seemed to be no room for anything but discontent. And such foolish discontent—discontent with his name! And yet, do you know, there are lots of people just as foolish as Peter Rabbit.

“Well, what are you going to do about it?”

The voice made Peter Rabbit jump and turn around hastily. There was Jimmy Skunk poking his head in at the opening of one of Peter's private little paths. He was grinning, and Peter knew by that grin that Jimmy had heard what he had said. Peter didn't know what to say. He hung his head in a very shame-faced way.

“You've got something to learn,” said Jimmy Skunk.

“What is it?” asked Peter.

“It's just this,” replied Jimmy.

There's nothing in a name except
Just what we choose to make it.
It lies with us and no one else
How other folks shall take it.
It's what we do and what we say
And how we live each passing day
That makes it big or makes it small
Or even worse than none at all.
A name just stands for what we are;

It's what we choose to make it.
And that's the way and only way
That other folks will take it.

Peter Rabbit made a face at Jimmy Skunk. "I don't like being preached to."

"I'm not preaching; I'm just telling you what you ought to know without being told," replied Jimmy Skunk. "If you don't like your name, why don't you change it?"

"What's that?" cried Peter sharply.

"If you don't like your name, why don't you change it?" repeated Jimmy.

Peter sat up and the disagreeable frown had left his face. "I—I—never thought of that," he said slowly. "Do you suppose I could, Jimmy Skunk?"

"Easiest thing in the world," replied Jimmy Skunk. "Just decide what name you like and then go tell all your friends that that is your new name and ask them to call you by it."

"I believe I will!" cried Peter Rabbit.

"Well, let me know what it is when you have decided," said Jimmy, as he started for home. And all the way up the crooked little path, Jimmy chuckled to himself as he thought of foolish Peter Rabbit trying to change his name.

(The Adventures of Peter Cottontail, Chapter 1)

STORY 391. May 15, 1913

Peter Cottontail.

Peter Rabbit had quite lost his appetite. When Peter forgets to eat you may make up your mind that Peter has something very important to think about. At least he has something on his mind that he thinks is important. The fact is, Peter had fully made up his mind to change his name. Yes, sir, that is just what Peter Rabbit was planning to do. He thought Peter Rabbit too common a name, but when he tried to think of a better one, he found that no name that he could think of really pleased him anymore. So he thought and he thought and he thought and he thought. And the more he thought the less appetite he had.

Once Peter thought of going up to Johnny Chuck's house in the far corner of Farmer Brown's old orchard and asking Johnny to help him decide on a new name. He even started, but somehow he had a feeling that Johnny Chuck would just laugh at him and call him foolish, and so he once more settled down in the old briar patch to think.

Now Jimmy Skunk was the only one to whom Peter had told how discontented he was with his name, and it was Jimmy who had suggested to Peter that he change it. Jimmy thought it a great joke, and he straightway passed the word along among all the little meadow and forest people that Peter Rabbit was going to change his name. Everybody laughed and chuckled over the thought of Peter Rabbit's foolishness, and they planned to have a great deal of fun with Peter as soon as he should tell them his

new name.

Peter was sitting on the edge of his old briar patch one morning when Ol' Mistah Buzzard passed, flying low. "Good mo'ning, Brer Cottontail," said Ol' Mistah Buzzard, with a twinkle in his eye.

At first Peter didn't understand that Ol' Mistah Buzzard was speaking to him, and by the time he did it was too late to reply, for Ol' Mistah Buzzard was way, way up in the blue, blue sky.

"Cottontail, Cottontail." said Peter over and over to himself and began to smile. Every time he said it he liked it better.

"Cottontail, Peter Cottontail! How much better sounding that is than Peter Rabbit! That sounds as if I really was somebody. Yes, sir, that's the very name I want. Now I must send word to all my friends that hereafter I am no longer Peter Rabbit, but Peter Cottontail."

Peter kicked up his heels in just the funny way he always does when he is pleased. Suddenly he remembered that such a fine, long, high sounding name as Peter Cottontail demanded dignity. So he stopped kicking up his heels and began to practice putting on airs. But first he called to the Merry Little Breezes and told them about his change of name and asked them to tell all his friends that in the future he would not answer to the name of Peter Rabbit, but only to the name of Peter Cottontail. He was very grave and earnest and important as he explained it to the Merry Little Breezes. The Merry Little Breezes kept their faces straight while he was talking, but as soon, as they had left him to carry his message, they burst out laughing. It was such a joke!

And they giggled as they delivered this message to each of the little forest and meadow people:

Peter Rabbit's changed his name.
In the future without fail
You must call him, if you please,
Mr. Peter Cottontail.

While they were doing this, Peter was back in the old briar patch practicing new airs and trying to look very high and mighty and important, as became one with such a fine sounding name as Peter Cottontail.

(The Adventures of Peter Cottontail, Chapter 2)

STORY 392. May 16, 1913

Peter Cottontail Goes Forth for a Walk.

"Look who's coming!" Jimmy Skunk pointed down the Lone Little Path.

Bobby Coon looked and then both began to laugh. "I suppose," said Bobby Coon, wiping the tears of laughter from his eyes, "I suppose that that is Mister Peter Cottontail."

"I suppose it is, though it looks very much like Peter Rabbit, a little more foolish than he usually is," replied Jimmy Skunk.

Up the Lone Little Path came Peter Rabbit, or rather Peter Cottontail, if it please you. He was trying to walk with a very grand air. He held his head very high. He was coming very slowly, for it would not be dignified, you know, to hurry. Just before he reached Bobby Coon and Jimmy Skunk, little Striped Chipmunk bobbed up on log close by the path.

"Hello, Peter Rabbit!" cried Striped Chipmunk.

Peter pretended not to hear. He just held his head a little higher and didn't give Striped Chipmunk so much as a glance. Striped Chipmunk stared at Peter for minute, then he tried again.

"Hello, Peter Rabbit!" he shouted little louder than before. Still Peter took no notice. Striped Chipmunk looked puzzled. He scratched his head as he looked after Peter, and then, all in a flash, he remembered the news that the Merry Little Breezes had brought the day before. Striped Chipmunk grinned. He looked over to Bobby Coon and Jimmy Skunk and winked one of his bright eyes. Then he looked very sober and said:

"How do you do, Peter Cottontail?"

Peter heard him this time. O, yes, Peter heard him right away, although he had spoken in very low voice.

He turned and made what he imagined was a very grand bow as he said:

"I'm very well, thank you; and I hope you are the same, Striped Chipmunk."

Bobby Coon and Jimmy Skunk had to clap their hands over their mouths to keep from laughing aloud. But when Peter reached them they were as sober as judges and they greeted him very politely as Peter Cottontail.

"How do you like my new name?" Inquired Peter.

"Very much," replied Bobby Coon. "It is very grand sounding. I suppose you are hardly used to it yet."

"O, yes. Indeed! It comes very natural," drawled Peter. "In fact, I never hear my old name. I think I'll go down to the Smiling Pool and make call on Jerry Muskrat. By the way, don't you think it is a pity that his name is so very common sounding?"

Jimmy Skunk gravely said that he did, and that he should think that Jerry Muskrat would have it changed.

"So should I," replied Peter, "and I am going to tell him so."

With that Peter started off along the Lone Little Path. Bobby Coon and Jimmy Skunk watched him go, and as soon as he was out of sight they put their heads together. If Peter could have seen them he might have forgotten some of those newly found airs he was putting on.

“He doesn’t hear his old name,” chuckled Bobby Coon. “We’ll see, Peter Rabbit! We’ll see!”

If Peter Rabbit cannot hear
I fear we’ll have to make him,
Lest Peter Cottontail be deaf
And Reddy Fox should take him

STORY 393. May 17, 1913

There’s Nothing Like the Old Name After All.

Bobby Coon and Jimmy Skunk had their heads together. Now when these two put their heads together, you may make up your mind that they are planning mischief. Yes, sir, there is sure to be mischief afoot when Bobby Coon and Jimmy Skunk put their heads together as they were doing now. Had Peter Rabbit looked back and seen them, he might not have felt so easy in his mind as he did. But Peter didn’t look back. He was too much taken up with trying to look as important as his new name sounded. You see he had thought the name Peter Rabbit too common, and so he had taken the name Peter Cottontail. Now he was putting on airs and holding his head very high as he went down to the Smiling Pool to call on Jerry Muskrat.

Whenever anyone called him by his old name, Peter pretended not to hear. He pretended that he had never heard that name and didn’t know that he was being spoken to. Bobby Coon and Jimmy Skunk thought it a great joke and they made up their minds that they would have some fun with Peter and perhaps make him see how very foolish he was. Yes, sir, they planned to teach Peter a lesson. Bobby Coon hurried away to find Reddy Fox and tell him that Peter had gone down to the Smiling Pool, and that if he hid beside the path, he might catch Peter on the way back.

Jimmy Skunk hunted up Blacky the Crow and Sammy Jay and told them of his plan and what he wanted them to do to help. Of course they promised that they would. Then he went to Ol’ Mistah Buzzard and told him. Ol’ Mistah Buzzard grinned and promised that he would do his share. Then Bobby Coon and Jimmy Skunk hid where they could see all that would happen.

Peter had reached the Smiling Pool and now sat on the bank admiring his own reflection in the water and talking to Jerry Muskrat. He had just told Jerry that when his old name was called out he didn’t hear it any more when along came Blacky the Crow.

“Hello, Peter Rabbit! You’re just the fellow I am looking for. I’ve a very important message for you,” shouted Blacky.

Peter kept right on talking with Jerry Muskrat just as if he didn’t hear, although he was burning with curiosity to know what the message was.

“I say, Peter Rabbit, are you deaf?” shouted Blacky the Crow.

Jerry Muskrat looked up at Blacky and winked. “Peter Rabbit isn’t here,” said he. “This is Peter Cottontail.”

“Oh!” said Blacky. “My message is for Peter Rabbit, and it’s something he really ought to know. I’m sorry he isn’t here.” And with that, away flew Blacky the Crow, chuckling to himself.

Peter looked quite as uncomfortable as he felt, but of course he couldn’t say a word after boasting that he didn’t hear people who called him Peter Rabbit. Pretty soon along came Sammy Jay. Sammy seemed very much excited.

“Oh, Peter Rabbit, I’m so glad I’ve found you!” he cried. “I’ve some very important news for you.”

Peter had all he could do to sit still and pretend not to hear, but he did.

“This is Peter Cottontail,” said Jerry Muskrat, winking at Sammy Jay.

“Oh,” replied Sammy, “my news is for Peter Rabbit!” and off he flew, chuckling to himself.

Peter looked and felt more uncomfortable than ever. He bade Jerry Muskrat good-bye and started for the dear old briar patch to think things over. When he was half way there, Ol’ Mistah Buzzard came sailing down out of the sky.

“Br’er Cottontail,” said he, “if yo’ see anything of Br’er Rabbit, yo’ tell him that Br’er Fox am hiding behind that big bunch of grass just ahead.”

Peter stopped short, and his heart gave a great leap. There, behind the clump of grass, was something red, sure enough. Peter didn’t wait to see more. He started for a hiding place he knew of in the Green Forest as fast as he could go, and behind him raced Reddy Fox. As he ran, he heard Blacky the Crow and Sammy Jay laughing, and then he knew that this was the news that they had had for him.

“I—I—guess that Peter Rabbit is a good enough name, after all,” he panted.

(The Adventures of Peter Cottontail, Chapter 3).

STORY 394. May 19, 1913

Jerry Muskrat Makes a Discovery.

The beautiful springtime had brought a great deal of happiness to the Smiling Pool, as it had to the Green Meadows and to the Green Forest. Great-Grandfather Frog, who had slept the long winter away in his own special bed way down in the mud, had waked up with an appetite so great that for a while it seemed as if he could think of nothing but his stomach. Jerry Muskrat had felt the spring fever in his bones and had gone up and down the Laughing Brook, poking into all kinds of places just for the fun of seeing new things. Little Joe Otter had been more full of fun than ever, if that were possible. Mr. and Mrs. Redwing had come back to the bulrushes from their winter home way down in the warm Southland. Everybody was happy, just as happy as could be.

One sunny morning Jerry Muskrat sat on the Big Rock in the middle of the Smiling Pool, just thinking of how happy everybody was and laughing at Little Joe Otter, who was cutting up all sorts of capers in the water. Suddenly Jerry’s sharp eyes

Illustrations. May 12 to May 17, 1913.



388. Johnny Chuck Goes Himself



389. Discontent of Peter Rabbit



390. Peter Rabbit Decides to Change His Name



391. Peter Cottontail



392. Peter Cottontail Goes Forth for a Walk



393. There's Nothing Like the Old Name After All

saw something that made him wrinkle his forehead in a puzzled frown and look and look at the opposite bank. Finally he called to Little Joe Otter.

“Hi, Little Joe! Come over here!” shouted Jerry.

“What for?” asked Little Joe, turning a somersault in the water.

“I want you to see if there is anything wrong with my eyes,” replied Jerry. Little Joe Otter stopped swimming and stared up at Jerry Muskrat.

“They look all right to me,” said he, as he started to climb up on the Big Rock.

“Of course they look all right,” replied Jerry, “but what I want to know is if they see all right. Look over at that bank.”

Little Joe Otter looked over at the bank. He stared and stared, but he didn’t see anything unusual. It looked just as it always did. He told Jerry Muskrat so.

“Then it must be my eyes,” sighed Jerry. “It certainly must be my eyes. It looks to me as if the water does not come as high up on the bank as it did yesterday.”

Little Joe Otter looked again and his eyes opened wide.

“You are right, Jerry Muskrat!” he cried. “There’s nothing the matter with your eyes. The water is as low as it ever gets, even in the very middle of summer. What can it mean?”

“I don’t know,” replied Jerry Muskrat. “It is queer! It certainly is very queer! Let’s go ask Grandfather Frog. You know he is very old and very wise, so perhaps he can tell us what it means.”

Splash! Jerry Muskrat and Little Joe Otter dived into the Smiling Pool and started a race to see who could reach Grandfather Frog first. He was sitting among the bulrushes on the edge of the Smiling Pool, for the lily-pads were not yet big enough for him to sit on comfortably.

“Oh, Grandfather Frog, what’s the matter with the Smiling Pool?” they shouted, as they came up quite out of breath.

“Chugarum! There’s nothing the matter with the Smiling Pool; it’s the best place in all the world,” replied Grandfather Frog gruffly.

“But there is something the matter,” insisted Jerry Muskrat, and then he told what he had discovered.

“I don’t believe it,” said Grandfather Frog. “I never heard of such a thing in the springtime.”

(The Adventures of Jerry Muskrat, Chapter 7)

STORY 395. May 20, 1913

Grandfather Frog Watches his Toes.

Grandfather Frog sat among the bulrushes on the edge of the Smiling Pool. Over his head Mr. Redwing was singing as if his heart would burst with the very joy of springtime.

Tra-la-la-lee, see me! See me!
Happy am I as I can be!
Happy am I the whole day long
And so I sing my gladsome song.

Of course Mr. Redwing was happy. Why shouldn't he be? Here it was the beautiful springtime, the gladdest time of all the year, the time when happiness crept into everybody's heart. Grandfather Frog listened. He nodded his head.

"Chugarum! I'm happy, too," said Grandfather Frog. But even as he said it, a little worried look crept into his big goggly eyes and then down to the corners of his big mouth, which had been stretched in a smile. Little by little the smile grew smaller and smaller, until there wasn't any smile. No, sir, there wasn't any smile. Instead of looking happy, as he said he felt, Grandfather Frog actually looked unhappy.

The fact is he couldn't forget what Jerry Muskrat and Little Joe Otter had told him—that there was something the matter with the Smiling Pool. He didn't believe it, not a word of it. At least he tried to make himself think that he didn't believe it. They said that the water in the Smiling Pool was growing lower and lower, just as it did in the middle of summer, in the very hottest weather. Now Grandfather Frog is very old and very wise, and he had never heard of such a thing happening in the springtime. So he wouldn't believe it now. And yet—and yet Grandfather Frog had an uncomfortable feeling that something was wrong. Ha! he knew now what it was! He had been sitting up to his middle in water, and now he was sitting with only his toes in the water, and he couldn't remember having changed his position!

"Of course, I moved without thinking what I was doing," muttered Grandfather Frog, but still the worried look didn't leave his face. You see he just couldn't make himself believe what he wanted to believe, try as he would.

"Chugarum! I know what I'll do; I'll watch my toes!" exclaimed Grandfather Frog.

So Grandfather Frog waded out into the water until it covered his feet, and then he sat down and began to watch his toes. Mr. Redwing looked down and saw him, and Grandfather Frog looked so funny gazing at his own toes that Mr. Redwing stopped singing long enough to ask:

"What are you doing, Grandfather Frog?"

"Watching my toes," replied Grandfather Frog gruffly.

"Watching your toes! He, he, he! Watching your toes! Who ever heard of such a thing? Are you afraid that they will run away, Grandfather Frog?" shouted Mr.

Redwing.

Grandfather Frog didn't answer. He kept right on watching his toes. Mr. Redwing flew away to tell everybody he met how Grandfather Frog had become foolish and was watching his toes. The sun shone down warm and bright, and pretty soon Grandfather Frog's big goggly eyes began to blink. Then his head began to nod, and then—why, then Grandfather Frog fell fast asleep.

By and by Grandfather Frog awoke with a start. He looked down at his toes. They were not in the water at all! Indeed, the water was a good long jump away.

"Chugarum! There is something wrong with the Smiling Pool!" cried Grandfather Frog, as he made a long jump into the water and started to swim out to the Big Rock.

(The Adventures of Jerry Muskrat, Chapter 8)

STORY 396. May 21, 1913

The Laughing Brook Stops Laughing.

There was something wrong. Grandfather Frog knew it the very minute he got up that morning. At first he couldn't think what it was. He sat with just his head out of water and blinked his great goggly eyes, as he tried to think what it was that was wrong. Suddenly Grandfather Frog realized how still it was. It was a different kind of stillness from anything he could ever remember. He missed something, and he couldn't think what it was. It wasn't the song of Mr. Redwing. There were many times when he didn't hear that. It was—Grandfather Frog gave a startled jump out on to the shore.

"Chugarum! It's the Laughing Brook! The Laughing Brook has stopped laughing!" cried Grandfather Frog.

Could it be? Who ever heard of such a thing, excepting when Jack Frost bound the Laughing Brook with hard black ice? Why, in the spring and in the summer and in the fall the Laughing Brook had laughed—such a merry, happy laugh—ever since Grandfather Frog could remember way back in the long ago, and you know he can remember way back in the long ago, for he is very old and very wise. Never once in all that time had the Laughing Brook failed to laugh. It couldn't be true now. Grandfather Frog put a hand behind one ear and listened and listened, but not a sound could he hear.

"Chugarum! It must be me," said Grandfather Frog. "It must be that I am growing old and deaf. I'll go over and ask Jerry Muskrat."

So Grandfather Frog dove into the water and swam out to the middle of the Smiling Pool, on his way to Jerry Muskrat's house. It was then that he first fully realized the truth of what Jerry Muskrat and Little Joe Otter had told him the day before—that there was something very, very wrong with the Smiling Pool.

He stopped swimming to look around, and it seemed as if his great goggly eyes would pop right out of his head. Yes, sir, it seemed as if those great goggly eyes certainly would pop right out of Grandfather Frog's head. The Smiling Pool had grown

so small that there wasn't enough of it left to smile!

"Where are you going, Grandfather Frog?" asked a voice over his head.

Grandfather Frog looked up. Looking down on him from over the edge of the Big Rock was Jerry Muskrat. The edge of the Big Rock was twice as high above the water as Grandfather Frog had ever seen it before.

"I—I—was going to swim over to your house to see you," replied Grandfather Frog.

"It's of no use," replied Jerry, "because I'm not there. Besides, you couldn't swim there, anyway."

"Why not?" demanded Grandfather Frog in great surprise.

"Because it isn't in the water any longer; it's way up on dry land," said Jerry Muskrat in the most mournful voice.

"What's that you say?" cried Grandfather Frog, as if he couldn't believe his own ears.

"It's just as true as that I'm sitting here," replied Jerry sadly.

"Listen, Jerry Muskrat, and tell me truly; is the Laughing Brook laughing?" cried Grandfather Frog sharply.

"No," replied Jerry, "the Laughing Brook has stopped laughing, and the Smiling Pool has stopped smiling, and I think the world is upside down."

(The Adventures of Jerry Muskrat, Chapter 9)

STORY 397. May 22, 1913

Why the World Looked Upside Down to Jerry Muskrat.

Jerry Muskrat sat on the Big Rock in the Smiling Pool, which smiled no longer, and held his head in both hands, for his head ached. He had thought and thought and thought, until it seemed to him that his head would split; and with all his thinking, he didn't understand things any more now than he had in the beginning. You see, Jerry Muskrat's little world was topsy-turvy. Yes, sir, Jerry's world was upside down! Anyway, it seemed so to him, and he couldn't understand it at all.

The Smiling Pool, the Laughing Brook, and the Green Meadows are Jerry Muskrat's little world. Now, as he sat on the Big Rock and looked about him, the Green Meadows were as lovely as ever. He could see no change in them. But the Laughing Brook had stopped laughing, and the Smiling Pool had stopped smiling. The truth is there wasn't enough of the Laughing Brook left to laugh, and there wasn't enough of the Smiling Pool left to smile.

It was dreadful! Jerry looked over to his house, of which he had once been so

proud. He had built it with the doorway under water. He had felt perfectly safe there, because no one excepting Billy Mink or Little Joe Otter, who can swim under water, could reach him. Now the Smiling Pool had grown so small that Jerry's house wasn't in the water at all. Anybody who wanted to could get into it. There was the doorway plainly to be seen. Worse still, there was the secret entrance to the long tunnel leading to his castle under the roots of the big hickory tree. That had been Jerry's most secret secret, and now there it was for all the world to see. And there were all the wonderful caves and holes and hiding-places under the bank which had been known only to Jerry Muskrat and Billy Mink and Little Joe Otter, because the openings had always been under water.

Now anybody could find them. And where had always been smiling, dimpling water, Jerry saw only mud. It was mud, mud, mud everywhere! The bulrushes, which had always grown with their feet in the water, now had them only in mud, and that was fast drying up. The lily pads lay half curled up at the ends of their long stems, stretched out on the mud, and looked very, very sick. Jerry turned towards the Laughing Brook. There was just a little, teeny-weeny stream of water trickling down the middle of it, with here and there a tiny pool in which frightened trout and minnows were crowded. All the secrets of the Laughing Brook were exposed, just as were the secrets of the Smiling Pool. Jerry knew that if he wanted to find Billy Mink's hiding-places, all he need do would be to walk up the Laughing Brook and look.

"Yes, sir, the world has turned upside down," said Jerry in a mournful voice.

"I believe it has," replied Grandfather Frog, looking up from the little pool of water left at the foot of the Big Rock.

"I know it has!" cried Jerry. "I wonder if it will ever turn upside up again."

"If it doesn't, what are you going to do?" asked Grandfather Frog.

"I don't know," replied Jerry Muskrat. "Here come Little Joe Otter and Billy Mink; let's find out what they are going to do."

(The Adventures of Jerry Muskrat, Chapter 10)

STORY 398. May 23, 1913

Five Heads Together.

Something had to be done. Jerry Muskrat said so. Grandfather Frog said so. Billy Mink said so. Little Joe Otter said so. Even Spotty the Turtle said so. The Laughing Brook couldn't laugh, and the Smiling Pool couldn't smile. You see, there wasn't water enough in either of them to laugh or smile, and nobody knew if there ever would be again. Nobody had ever known anything like it before, and so nobody knew what to think or do. And yet they all felt that something must be done.

"What do you think, Billy Mink?" asked Grandfather Frog.

Billy Mink looked down from the top of the Big Rock into the little pool of water

that was all there was left of the Smiling Pool. He could see a dozen fat trout in it, and he knew that he could catch them just as easily as not, because there was no place for them to swim away from him. But somehow he didn't want to catch them. He knew that they were frightened almost to death already by the running away of nearly all the water from the Laughing Brook and the Smiling Pool, and somehow he felt sorry for them.

"I think that the best thing we can do is to move down to the Big River. I've been down there, and that's all right," said Billy Mink.

"That's what I think," said Little Joe Otter. "There's no danger that it will go dry."

"How do you know?" asked Jerry Muskrat. "The Laughing Brook and the Smiling Pool never went dry before."

"It's a long, long way down to the Big River," broke in Spotty the Turtle, who travels very, very slowly and carries his house with him.

"Chugarum! I, for one, don't want to leave the Smiling Pool without finding out what the trouble is.

There's nothing happens, as you know,
But has a cause to make it so.

"Now, there must be some cause, some reason, for this terrible trouble with the Smiling Pool, and if we can find that out, perhaps we shall know better what to do," said Grandfather Frog.

Jerry Muskrat nodded his head. "Grandfather Frog is right," said he. "Of course there must be a cause, but where are we to look for it? I've been all over the Smiling Pool, and I'm sure it isn't there."

Grandfather Frog actually smiled. "Chugarum!" said he. "Of course the cause of all the trouble isn't in the Smiling Pool. Any one would know that!"

"Well, if you know so much, tell us where it is then!" snapped Jerry Muskrat.

"In the Laughing Brook, of course," replied Grandfather Frog.

"No such thing!" said Billy Mink. "I've been all the way down the Laughing Brook to the Big River, and I didn't find a thing."

"Have you been all the way up the Laughing Brook to the place it starts from?" asked Grandfather Frog.

"No-o," replied Billy Mink.

"Well, that's where the cause of all the trouble is," said Grandfather Frog, just as if he knew all about it. "It's the water that comes down the Laughing Brook that makes the Smiling Pool, and the Smiling Pool never could dry up if the Laughing Brook didn't first stop running."

"That's so! I had never had thought of that," cried Little Joe Otter. "I tell you what, Billy Mink and I will go way up the Laughing Brook and see what we can find."

“Chugarum! Let us all go,” said Grandfather Frog.

Then the five put their heads together and decided that they would go up the Laughing Brook to hunt for the trouble.

(The Adventures of Jerry Muskrat, Chapter 11)

STORY 399. May 24, 1913

A Hunt for Trouble

Ol’ Mistah Buzzard, sailing high in the blue, blue sky, looked down on a funny sight. Yes, sir, it certainly was a funny sight. It was a little procession of five of his friends of the Smiling Pool. First was Billy Mink, who, because he is slim and nimble, moves so quickly it sometimes is hard to follow him. Behind him was Little Joe Otter, whose legs are so short that he almost looks as if he hadn’t any. Behind Little Joe was Jerry Muskrat, who is a better traveler in the water than on land. Behind Jerry was Grandfather Frog, who neither walks nor runs but travels with great jumps. Last of all was Spotty the Turtle, who travels very, very slowly because, you know, he carries his house with him. And all five were headed up the Laughing Brook, which laughed no more, because there was not water enough in it.

Now Ol’ Mistah Buzzard hadn’t been over near the Smiling Pool for some time, and he hadn’t heard how the Smiling Pool had stopped smiling, and the Laughing Brook had stopped laughing. When he looked down and saw how the water was so nearly gone from them that the trout and the minnows had hardly enough in which to live, he was so surprised that he kept saying over and over to himself:

“Fo’ the lan’s sake! Fo’ the lan’s sake!”

Then, when he saw his five little friends marching up the Laughing Brook, he guessed right away that it must be something to do with the trouble in the Smiling Pool. Ol’ Mistah Buzzard just turned his broad wings and slid down, down out of the blue, blue sky until he was right over Grandfather Frog.

“Where are yo’alls going?” asked Ol’ Mistah Buzzard.

“Chugarum! To find out what is the trouble with the Laughing Brook,” replied Grandfather Frog.

“I’ll help you,” said Ol’ Mistah Buzzard, once more sailing up in the blue, blue sky.

Grandfather Frog watched him until he was nothing but a speck. “I wish I had wings,” sighed Grandfather Frog, and once more began to hop along up the bed of the Laughing Brook.

The Laughing Brook came down from the Green Forest and wound through the Green Meadows for a little way before it reached the Smiling Pool. There the sun shone down into it, and Grandfather Frog didn’t mind, although his legs were getting tired. But when they got into the Green Forest it was dark and gloomy. At least Grandfather

Illustrations. May 19 to May 24, 1913.



394. Jerry Muskrat Makes a Discovery



395. Grandfather Frog Watches his Toes



396. The Laughing Brook Stops Laughing



397. Why the World Looked Upside Down to Jerry Muskrat



398. Five Heads Together



399. A Hunt for Trouble

Frog thought so, and so did Spotty the Turtle, for both dearly love the sunshine. But still they kept on, for they felt that they must find the trouble with the Laughing Brook. If they found this, they would also find the trouble with the Smiling Pool.

So Billy Mink jumped and skipped far ahead; Little Joe Otter ran; Jerry Muskrat walked, for he soon gets tired on land; Grandfather Frog hopped; Spotty the Turtle crawled, and way, way up in the blue, blue sky, Ol' Mistah Buzzard flew, all looking for the trouble which had stopped the laughing of the Laughing Brook and the smiling of the Smiling Pool.

(The Adventures of Jerry Muskrat, Chapter 12)

STORY 400. May 26, 1913

Ol' Mistah Buzzard Sees Something.

(The Adventures of Jerry Muskrat, Chapter 13)

"Wait for me!" cried Little Joe Otter to Billy Mink, but Billy Mink was in too much of a hurry and just ran faster.

"Wait for me!" cried Jerry Muskrat to Little Joe Otter, but Little Joe was in too much of a hurry and just ran faster.

"Wait for me!" cried Grandfather Frog to Jerry Muskrat, but Jerry was in too much of a hurry and just walked faster.

"Wait for me!" cried Spotty the Turtle to Grandfather Frog, but Grandfather Frog was in too much of a hurry and just jumped faster.

So running and walking and jumping and crawling, Billy Mink, Little Joe Otter, Jerry Muskrat, Grandfather Frog, and Spotty the Turtle hurried up the Laughing Brook to try to find out why it laughed no more. And high overhead in the blue, blue sky sailed Ol' Mistah Buzzard, and he also was looking for the trouble that had taken away the laugh from the Laughing Brook and the smile from the Smiling Pool.

Now Ol' Mistah Buzzard's eyes are very sharp, and looking down from way up in the blue, blue sky he can see a great deal. Indeed, Ol' Mistah Buzzard can see all that is going on below on the Green Meadows and in the Green Forest. His wings are very broad, and he can sail through the air very swiftly when he makes up his mind to. Now, as he looked down, he saw that Billy Mink was selfish and wouldn't wait for Little Joe Otter, and Little Joe Otter was selfish and wouldn't wait for Jerry Muskrat, and Jerry Muskrat was selfish and wouldn't wait for Grandfather Frog, and Grandfather Frog was selfish and wouldn't wait for Spotty the Turtle.

"Ah reckon Ah will hurry up right smart and find out what the trouble is mahself, and then go back and tell Brer Turtle; it will save him a powerful lot of work, and it will serve Brer Mink right if Brer Turtle finds out first what the trouble with the Laughing Brook is," said Ol' Mistah Buzzard and shot far ahead over the Green Forest toward that part of it from which the Laughing Brook comes. In a few minutes he was

as far ahead of Billy Mink as Billy was ahead of Spotty the Turtle.

For wings are swifter far than legs,
On whatsoever purpose bent,
But doubly swift and tireless
Those wings on kindly deed intent.

And this is how it happened that Ol' Mistah Buzzard was the first to find out what it was that had stopped the laughing of the Laughing Brook and the smiling of the Smiling Pool, but he was so surprised when he did find out, that he forgot all about going back to tell Spotty the Turtle. He forgot everything but his own great surprise, and he blinked his eyes a great many times to make sure that he wasn't dreaming. Then he sailed around and around in circles, looking down among the trees of the Green Forest and saying over and over to himself:

"Did yo' ever? No, I never! Did yo' ever? No, I never!"

STORY 401. May 27, 1913

Spotty the Turtle Keeps Right on Going.

One step, two steps, three steps, so,
Four steps, five steps, six steps go!
Keep right on and do your best;
Mayhap you'll win while others rest.

Spotty the Turtle said this over to himself every time he felt a little down-hearted, as he plodded along the bed of the Laughing Brook. And every time he said it, he felt better. "One step, two steps," he kept saying over and over, and each time he said it, he took a step and then another. They were very short steps, very short steps indeed, for Spotty's legs are very short. But each one carried him forward just so much, and he knew that he was just so much nearer the thing he was seeking. Anyway, he hoped he was.

You see, the Laughing Brook was almost dry. There was only a little thread of water left in it. And because the Smiling Pool gets all its water from the Laughing Brook, why of course the Smiling Pond was almost dry too, and that was a dreadful state of affairs for those who lived there. So Billy Mink and Little Joe Otter and Grandfather Frog and Spotty the Turtle had started up the Laughing Brook to try and find out what the trouble was. You see, if the Laughing Brook would never laugh any more, and the Smiling Pool would never smile any more, there was nothing to do but to go down to the Big River to live, and no one wanted to do that, especially Grandfather Frog and Spotty the Turtle.

So they started out together to hunt for the cause of the trouble in the Laughing Brook, but they didn't stay together, because Billy Mink could go faster than Little Joe Otter, and Little Joe Otter could go faster than Jerry Muskrat, and Jerry could go faster than Grandfather Frog, and Grandfather Frog could go faster than Spotty the Turtle, and because each one wanted to be the first to find the trouble, no one would wait for

the one behind him. And so Spotty the Turtle, who has to carry his house with him, was a long, long way behind the others. But he kept right on going—

“One step, two steps, three steps, so!”

—and he didn’t stop for anything. He crawled over sticks and around big stones and sometimes, when he found a little pool of water, he swam. He always felt better then, because he can swim faster than he can walk.

After a long, long time, Spotty the Turtle came to a little pool where the sunshine lay warm and inviting. There, in the middle of it, on a mossy stone, sat Grandfather Frog fast asleep. He had thought that he was so far ahead of Spotty that he could safely rest his tired legs. Spotty wanted to climb right up beside him and take a nap too, but he didn’t. He just grinned and kept right on going—

“One step, two steps, three steps, so!”

—while Grandfather Frog slept on.

By and by, after a long, long time Spotty came to another little pool, and who should he see but Jerry Muskrat busily opening and eating some freshwater clams which he had found there. He was so busy enjoying himself that he didn’t see Spotty, and Spotty didn’t say a word, but kept right on going, although the sight of Jerry’s feast had made him dreadfully hungry.

By and by, after a long, long time, he came to a third little pool with a high, smooth bank, and who should he see there but Little Joe Otter, who had made a slippery slide down the smooth bank and was having a glorious time sliding down into the little pool. Spotty would have liked to take just one slide, but he didn’t. He didn’t even let Little Joe Otter see him, but kept right on going.

“One step, two steps, three steps, so!”

By and by, after a long, long time, he came to a hollow log, and just happening to peep in, he saw someone curled up fast asleep. Who was it? Why, Billy Mink, to be sure! You see, Billy thought that he was so far ahead that he might just as well take it easy, and that was what he was doing. Spotty the Turtle didn’t waken him. He just kept right on going the same slow way he had come all day, and so, just as jolly, round, red Mr. Sun was going to bed behind the Purple Hills, Spotty the Turtle found the cause of the trouble in the Laughing Brook and the Smiling Pool.

(The Adventures of Jerry Muskrat, Chapter 14)

STORY 402. May 28, 1913

What Spotty the Turtle Found.

Spotty the Turtle stared and stared and stared, until it seemed as if his eyes surely would pop out of his funny little head. Of course he could believe his own eyes, and yet—and yet—well, if anybody else had seen what he was looking at and had told him about it, he wouldn’t have believed it. No, sir, he wouldn’t have believed it. You see, he

couldn't have believed it because—why, because it didn't seem as if it could be really and truly so.

He wondered if the sun shining in his eyes made him think he saw more than he really did see, so he carefully changed his position. It made no difference. Then Spotty was sure that what he saw was real, and that he had found the trouble in the Laughing Brook, which had caused it to stop laughing and the Smiling Pool to stop smiling.

Spotty the Turtle was feeling pretty good. In fact, Spotty was feeling very good indeed, because he had been the first to find out what was the matter with the Laughing Brook. At least, he thought that he was the first, and he was of all the little people who live in the Smiling Pool. Only Ol' Mistah Buzzard had been before him, and he didn't count because his wings are broad, and all he had to do was to sail over the Green Forest and look down. The ones who really counted were Billy Mink and Little Joe Otter and Jerry Muskrat and Grandfather Frog who had started out with Spotty the Turtle, and who had selfishly left him far, far behind because he crawls so slowly. But he had kept on crawling. Billy Mink had stopped for a nap. Little Joe Otter had stopped to play. Jerry Muskrat had stopped to eat. Grandfather Frog had stopped for a sun nap. But Spotty the Turtle had kept right on going, and now here he was, the first one to find the cause of the trouble in the Laughing Brook. Do you wonder that he felt proud and very happy?

Keeping at it, that's the way
Spotty won the race that day.

But now Spotty was beginning to wish that some of the others would hurry up. He wanted to know what they thought. He wanted to talk it all over. It was such a surprising thing that he could make neither head nor tail of it himself, and he wondered what the others would say.

And now the long black shadows were creeping through the Green Forest, and if they didn't get there pretty soon, they would have to wait until the next day.

So Spotty the Turtle found a good place to spend the night, and then he sat down to watch and wait. Right before him was the thing which he had found and which puzzled him so. What was it? Why, it was a wall. Yes, sir, that is just what it was—a wall of logs and sticks and mud, and it was right across the Laughing Brook, where the banks were steep and narrow. Of course the Laughing Brook could laugh no longer; there couldn't enough water get through that wall of logs and sticks and mud to make even the beginning of a laugh. Spotty wondered what lay behind that wall, and who had built it, and what for, and a lot of other things. And he was still wondering when he fell asleep.

(The Adventures of Jerry Muskrat, Chapter 15)

The Pond in the Green Forest.

Spotty the Turtle was awake by the time the first rays of the rising sun began to creep through the Green Forest. He was far, far up the Laughing Brook, very much farther than he had ever been before, and as he yawned and stretched, he wondered if after all he hadn't dreamed about the wall of logs and sticks and mud across the Laughing Brook. When he had rubbed the last sleepy wink out of his eyes, he looked again. There it was, just as he had seen it the night before!

Then Spotty knew that it was real, and he began to wonder what was on the other side of it. "I cannot climb it, for my legs were never made for climbing," said Spotty mournfully as he looked at his funny little black feet. "Oh, dear, I wish that I could climb like Happy Jack Squirrel!" Just then a thought popped into his head and chased away the little frown that had crept into Spotty's face. "Perhaps Happy Jack sometimes wishes that he could swim as I can, so I guess we are even. I can't climb, but he can't swim. How foolish it is to wish for things never meant for you!" thought Spotty.

And with that, all the discontent left Spotty the Turtle, and he began to study how he could make the most of his short legs and his perseverance, of which, as you already know, he had a great deal. He looked this way, and he looked that way, and he saw that if he could climb to the top of the bank on one side of the Laughing Brook, he would be able to walk right out on the strange wall of logs and sticks and mud, and then, of course, he could see just what was on the other side.

So Spotty the Turtle wasted no more time wishing that he could do something it was never meant that he should do. Instead, he picked out what looked like the easiest place to climb the bank and started up. My, my, my, it was hard work! You see, he had to carry his house along with him, for he has to carry that wherever he goes, and it would have been hard enough to have climbed that bank without carrying anything. Every time he had climbed up three steps he slipped back two steps. But he kept at it, puffing and blowing, saying over and over to himself:

I can if I will, and will if I can;

There's nothing can stop me if I stick to this plan.

Half-way up the bank Spotty lost his balance, and the house he was carrying just tipped him right over backward, and down he rolled to the place he had started from.

"I needed to cool off," said Spotty to himself and slid into a little pool of water. Then he tried the bank again, and just as before he slipped back two steps for every three he went up. But he shut his mouth tight and kept at it, and by and by he was up to the place from which he had tumbled. There he stopped to get his breath.

"I can if I will, and I will if I can!" said he and started on again. Twice more he tumbled clear down to the place he had started from, but each time he laughed at himself and tried again. And at last he reached the top of the bank.

"I said I could if I would, and I would if I could, and I have!" he cried.

Then he hurried to see what was behind the strange wall. What do you think it was? Why, a pond! Yes, sir, there was a pond right in the middle of the Green Forest! Trees were coming up right out of the middle of it, but it was a sure enough pond. Spotty found it harder work to believe his own eyes now than when he had first seen the strange wall across the Laughing Brook.

“Why, why, why, what does it mean?” exclaimed Spotty the Turtle.

“That’s what I want to know!” cried Billy Mink, who came hurrying up just then.

(The Adventures of Jerry Muskrat, Chapter 16)

STORY 404. May 30, 1913

Who Had Made the Strange Pond?

Who had made the strange pond? That is what Spotty the Turtle wanted to know. That is what Billy Mink wanted to know. So did Little Joe Otter and Jerry Muskrat and Grandfather Frog, when they arrived. So did Ol’ Mistah Buzzard, looking down from the blue, blue sky. It was very strange, very strange indeed! Never had there been a pond in that part of the Green Forest before, not even in the days when Sister South Wind melted the snow so fast that the Laughing Brook ran over its banks and the Smiling Pool grew twice as large as it ought to be.

Of course someone had made it. Spotty the Turtle had known that as soon as he had seen the strange pond. All in a flash he had understood what that wall of logs and brush and mud across the Laughing Brook was for. It was to stop the water from running down the Laughing Brook. And of course, if the water couldn’t keep on running and laughing on its way to the Smiling Pool, it would just stand still and grow and grow into a pond. Of course! There was nothing else for it to do. Spotty felt very proud when he had thought that out all by himself.

“This wall we are sitting on has made the pond,” said Spotty the Turtle, after a long time in which no one had spoken.

“You don’t say so!” said Billy Mink. “However, ever, did you guess it? Are you sure, quite sure that the pond didn’t make the wall?”

Spotty knew that Billy Mink was making fun of him, but he is too good-natured to lose his temper over a little thing like that. He tried to think of something smart to say in reply, but Spotty is a slow thinker as well as a slow walker, and before he could think of anything, Billy was talking once more.

“This wall is what Farmer Brown’s boy calls a dam,” said Billy Mink, who is a great traveler. “Dams are usually built to keep water from running where it isn’t wanted or to make it go where it is wanted. Now, what I want to know is, who under the sun wants a pond way back here in the Green Forest, and what is it for? Who do you think built this dam, Grandfather Frog?”

Grandfather Frog shook his head. His big goggly eyes seemed more goggly than

ever, as he stared at the new pond in the Green Forest.

“I don’t know,” said Grandfather Frog. “I don’t know what to think.”

“Why, it must be Farmer Brown’s boy or Farmer Brown himself,” said Jerry Muskrat.

“Of course,” said Little Joe Otter, just as if he knew all about it.

Still Grandfather Frog shook his head, as if he didn’t agree. “I don’t know,” said Grandfather Frog, “I don’t know. It doesn’t look so to me.”

Billy Mink ran along the top of the dam and down the back side. He looked it all over with those sharp little eyes of his.

“Grandfather Frog is right,” said he, when he came back. “It doesn’t look like the work of Farmer Brown or Farmer Brown’s boy. But if they didn’t do it, who did? Who could have done it?”

“I don’t know,” said Grandfather Frog again, in a dreamy sort of voice.

Spotty the Turtle looked at him, and saw that Grandfather Frog’s face wore the far-away look that it always does when he tells a story of the days when the world was young. “I don’t know,” he repeated, “but it looks to me very much like the work of—” Grandfather Frog stopped short off and turned to Jerry Muskrat. “Jerry Muskrat,” said he, so sharply that Jerry nearly lost his balance in his surprise, “has your big cousin come down from the North?”

(The Adventures of Jerry Muskrat, Chapter 17)

STORY 405. May 31, 1913

Jerry Muskrat’s Big Cousin.

Fiddle, faddle, feedle, fuddle!
Was there ever such a muddle?
Fuddle, feedle, faddle, fiddle!
Who is there will solve the riddle?

Here was the Laughing Brook laughing no longer. Here was the Smiling Pool smiling no longer. Here was a brand new pond deep in the Green Forest. Here was a wall of logs and bushes and mud called a dam, built by someone whom nobody had seen. And here was Grandfather Frog asking Jerry Muskrat if his big cousin had come down from the North, when Jerry didn’t even know that he had a big cousin.

“I—I haven’t any big cousin,” said Jerry, when he had quite recovered from his surprise at Grandfather Frog’s question.

“Chugarum!” exclaimed Grandfather Frog, and the scornful way in which he said it made Jerry Muskrat feel very small. “Chugarum! Of course you’ve got a big cousin in the North. Do you mean to tell me that you don’t know that, Jerry Muskrat?”

Jerry had to admit that it was true that he didn’t know anything about that big

cousin. If Grandfather Frog said that he had one, it must be so, for Grandfather Frog is very old and very wise, and he knows a great deal. Still, it was very hard for Jerry to believe that he had a big cousin of whom he had never heard.

“Did—did you ever see him, Grandfather Frog?” Jerry asked.

“No!” snapped Grandfather Frog. “I never did, but I know all about him. He is a great worker, is this big cousin of yours, and he builds dams like this one we are sitting on.”

“I don’t believe it!” cried Billy Mink. “I don’t believe any cousin of Jerry Muskrat’s ever built such a dam as this. Why, just look at that great tree trunk. No one but Farmer Brown or Farmer Brown’s boy could ever have dragged that there. You’re crazy, Grandfather Frog, just plain crazy.” Billy Mink sometimes is very disrespectful to Grandfather Frog.

“Chugarum!” replied Grandfather Frog. “I’m pretty old, but I’m not too old to learn as some folks seem to be,” and he looked very hard at Billy Mink. “Did I say that that tree trunk was dragged here?”

“No,” replied Billy Mink, “but if it wasn’t dragged here, how did it get here? You are so smart, Grandfather Frog, tell me that!”

Grandfather Frog blinked his great goggly eyes at Billy Mink as he said, just as if he was very, very sorry for Billy, “Your eyes are very bright and very sharp, Billy Mink, and it is a great pity that you have never learned how to use them. That tree wasn’t dragged here; it was cut so that it fell right where it lies.” As he spoke, Grandfather Frog pointed to the stump of the tree, and Billy Mink saw that he was right.

But Billy Mink is like a great many other people; he dearly loves to have the last word. Now he suddenly began to laugh.

“Ha, ha, ha! Ho, ho, ho!” laughed Billy Mink. “Ho, ho, ho! Ha, ha, ha!”

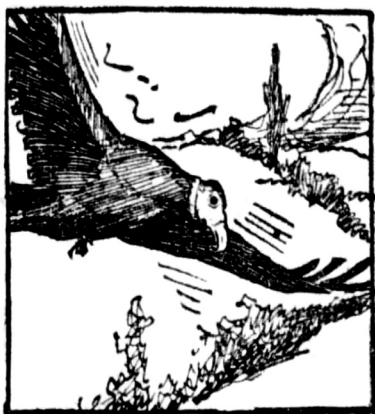
“What is it that is so funny?” snapped Grandfather Frog, for nothing makes him so angry as to be laughed at.

“Do you mean to say that anybody but Farmer Brown or Farmer Brown’s boy could have cut down such a big tree as that?” asked Billy. “Why, that would be as hard as to drag the tree here.”

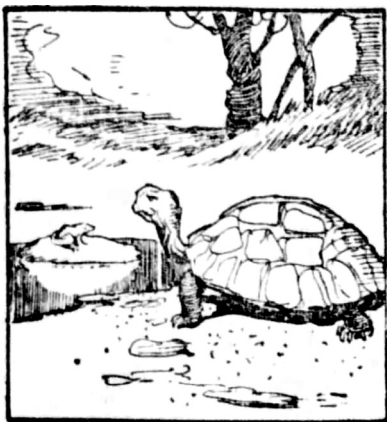
“Jerry Muskrat’s big cousin from the North could do it, and I believe he did,” replied Grandfather Frog. “Now that we have found the cause of the trouble in the Laughing Brook and the Smiling Pool, what are we going to do about it?”

(The Adventures of Jerry Muskrat, Chapter 18)

Illustrations. May 26 to May 31, 1913.



400. Ol' Mistah Buzzard Sees Something



401. Spotty the Turtle Keeps Right on Going



402. What Spotty the Turtle Found



403. The Pond in the Green Forest



404. Who Had Made the Strange Pond?



405. Jerry Muskrat's Big Cousin

Jerry Muskrat Has a Busy Day

There was the strange pond in the Green Forest, and there was the dam of logs and sticks and mud which had made the strange pond, but look as they would, Billy Mink and Little Joe Otter and Jerry Muskrat and Grandfather Frog and Spotty the Turtle could see nothing of the one who had built the dam. It was very queer. The more they thought about it, the queerer it seemed. They looked this way, and they looked that way.

“There is one thing very sure, and that is that whoever built this dam had no thought for those who live in the Laughing Brook and the Smiling Pool,” said Grandfather Frog. “They are selfish, just plain, every day selfish; that’s what they are! Now the Laughing Brook cannot laugh, and the Smiling Pool cannot smile, while this dam stops the water from running, and so—” Grandfather Frog stopped and looked around at his four friends.

“And so what?” cried Billy Mink impatiently.

“And so we must spoil this dam. We must make a place for the water to run through,” said Grandfather Frog very gravely.

“Of course! That’s the very thing!” cried Little Joe Otter and Billy Mink and Jerry Muskrat and Spotty the Turtle. Then Little Joe Otter looked at Billy Mink, and Billy Mink looked at Jerry Muskrat, and Jerry Muskrat looked at Spotty the Turtle, and after that they all looked very hard at Grandfather Frog, and all together they asked: “How are we going to do it?”

Grandfather Frog scratched his head thoughtfully and looked a long time at the dam of logs and sticks and mud. Then his big mouth widened in a big smile. “Why, that is very simple,” said he, “Jerry Muskrat will make a big hole through the dam near the bottom, because he knows how, and the rest of us will keep watch to see that no harm comes near.”

“The very thing!” cried Little Joe Otter and Billy Mink and Spotty the Turtle, but Jerry Muskrat thought it wasn’t fair. You see, it gave him all of the real work to do. However, Jerry thought of his dear Smiling Pool, and how terrible it would be if it should smile no more, and so he set to work without another word. Now Jerry Muskrat is a great worker, and he had made many long tunnels into the bank around the Smiling Pool, so he had no doubt but that he could soon make a hole through this dam. But almost right away he found trouble. Yes, sir, Jerry had hardly begun before he found real trouble. You see, that dam was made mostly of sticks instead of mud, and so, instead of digging his way in as he would have done into the bank of the Smiling Pool, he had to stop every few minutes to gnaw off sticks that were in the way.

It was hard work, the hardest kind of hard work. But Jerry Muskrat is the kind that the harder the work to be done the more determined he is to do it. And so, while Grandfather Frog sat on one end of the dam and pretended to keep watch, but really took a nap in the warm sunshine, and while Spotty the Turtle sat on the other end of

the dam doing the same thing, and while Billy Mink and Little Joe Otter swam around in the strange pond and enjoyed themselves, Jerry Muskrat worked and worked and worked. And just as jolly, round, red Mr. Sun started down behind the Purple Hills, Jerry broke through into the strange pond, and the water began to run in the Laughing Brook once more.

(The Adventures of Jerry Muskrat, Chapter 19)

STORY 407. June 3, 1913

Jerry Muskrat Has a Disappointment

There's nothing in this world that's sure,
No matter how we scheme and plan.
We simply have to be content
With doing just the best we can.

Jerry Muskrat had curled himself up for the night, so tired that he could hardly keep his eyes open long enough to find a comfortable place to sleep. But he was happy. Yes, indeed, Jerry was happy. He could hear the Laughing Brook beginning to laugh again. It was just a little low, gurgling laugh, but Jerry knew that in a little while it would grow into the full laugh that makes music through the Green Forest and puts happiness into the hearts of all who hear it.

So Jerry was happy, for was it not because of him that the Laughing Brook was beginning to laugh? He had worked all the long day to make a hole through the dam which some one had built across the Laughing Brook and so stopped its laughter and now the water was running again, and soon the new, strange pond behind the dam there in the Green Forest would be gone, and the Laughing Brook and the Smiling Pool would be their own beautiful selves once more. It was because he had worked so hard all day that he was going to sleep now. Usually he would rather sleep a part of the day and be abroad at night.

Very pleasant dreams had Jerry Muskrat that night—dreams of the dear Smiling Pool, smiling just as it had as long as Jerry could remember, before this trouble had come. He was still dreaming when Spotty the Turtle found him and waked him, for it was broad daylight. Jerry yawned and stretched, and then he lay still for a minute to listen to the pleasant murmur of the Laughing Brook. But there wasn't any pleasant murmur. There wasn't any sound at all. Jerry began to wonder if he really was awake after all. He looked at Spotty the Turtle, and he knew then that he was, for Spotty's face had such a worried look.

"Get up, Jerry Muskrat, and come look at the hole you made yesterday in the dam. You couldn't have done your work very well, for the hole has filled up so that the water does not run any more," said Spotty.

"I did do it well!" snapped Jerry crossly. "I did it just as well as I know how. You lazy folks who just sit and take sun naps while you pretend to keep watch had better get busy and do a little work yourselves, if you don't like the way I work."

"I—I beg your pardon, Jerry Muskrat. I didn't mean to say just that," replied Spotty. "You see, we are all worried. We thought last night that by this morning the Laughing Brook would be full of water again, and we could go back to the Smiling Pool as soon as we felt like it, and here it is as bad as ever."

"Perhaps the trouble is just that some sticks and grass drifted down in the water and filled up the hole I made; that must be the trouble," said Jerry hopefully, as he hurried towards the dam.

First he carefully examined it from the Laughing Brook side. Then he dived down under water on the other side. He was gone a long time, and Billy Mink was just getting ready to dive to see what had become of him when he came up again.

"What is the trouble?" cried Spotty the Turtle and Grandfather Frog and Billy Mink and Little Joe Otter together. "Is the hole filled up with stuff that has drifted in?"

Jerry shook his head, as he slowly climbed out of the water. "No," said he. "No, it isn't filled with drift stuff brought down by the water. It is filled with sticks and mud that somebody has put there. Somebody has filled up the hole that I worked so hard to make yesterday, and it will take me all day to open it up again."

Then Grandfather Frog and Spotty the Turtle and Billy Mink and Little Joe Otter and Jerry Muskrat stared at one another, and for a long time no one said a word.

(*The Adventures of Jerry Muskrat*, Chapter 20, "Jerry Muskrat has a Dreadful Disappointment")

STORY 408. June 4, 1913

Jerry Muskrat Keeps Watch

The way in which to find things out,
And what goes on all round about,
Is just to keep my two eyes peeled
And two ears all the time unsealed."

So said Jerry Muskrat, as he settled himself comfortably on one end of the new dam across the Laughing Brook deep in the Green Forest and watched the dark shadows creep farther and farther out into the strange pond made by the new dam. "I'm going to find out who it is that built this dam, and who it is that filled the hole I made in it! I'm going to find out if I have to move up here and live all summer!" The way in which Jerry said this and snapped his teeth together showed that he meant just what he said.

You see Jerry had spent another long, weary day making a hole a hole through that dam so that the water could once more flow down the Laughing Brook into the Smiling Pool where his home was. The next morning he found that in the night someone had filled his hole up. Then he had spent another long weary day opening the hole in the dam once more, only to have it closed again while he slept. That had been enough for Jerry. He hadn't tried again. Instead he had made up his mind that he would find out

who was playing such a trick on him. He would just watch until they came, and then if they were not bigger than he, or there were not too many of them, he would—well, the way Jerry gritted and clashed those sharp teeth of his sounded as if he meant to do something pretty bad.

Billy Mink and Little Joe Otter, who had come up with Jerry Muskrat and Grandfather Frog and Spotty the Turtle to find out what had stopped the laughter of the Laughing Brook, had given up in disgust and started for the Big River. They are great travelers, anyway, and so didn't mind so much because there was no longer water enough in the Laughing Brook and the Smiling Pool. Grandfather Frog and Spotty the Turtle, who are such very, very slow travelers, had decided that the Big River was too far away, and so they would stay and live in the strange pond for a while, though it wasn't nearly so nice as their dear Smiling Pool. They had gone to sleep now, each in his own secret place where he would be safe for the night.

So Jerry Muskrat sat alone and watched. The black shadows crept farther and farther across the pond and grew blacker and blacker. Jerry didn't mind this, because, as you know, his eyes are made for seeing in the dark, and he dearly loves the night. Jerry had sat there a long time without moving, listening and watching. By and by he saw something that made him draw in his breath and anger leap into his eyes. It was a little silver line on the water, and it was coming straight towards the dam where he sat. Jerry knew that it was made by someone swimming.

"Ha!" said Jerry. "Now we shall see!"

Nearer and nearer came the silver line. Then Jerry made out the head of the swimmer. Suddenly all the anger left Jerry. He didn't have room for anger; a great fear had crowded it out. The head was bigger than that of any Muskrat Jerry had ever seen. It was bigger than the head of any of Billy Mink's relatives. It was the head of a stranger, a stranger so big that Jerry felt very, very small and hoped with all his might that the stranger would not see him.

Jerry held his breath as the stranger swam past and then climbed out on the dam. He looked very much like Jerry himself, only ever and ever so much bigger. And his tail! Jerry had never seen such a tail. It was very broad and flat. Suddenly the big stranger turned and looked straight at Jerry.

"Hello, Jerry Muskrat!" said he. "Don't you know me?"

Jerry was too frightened to speak.

"I'm your big cousin from the North; I'm Paddy the Beaver, and if you leave my dam alone, I think we'll be good friends," continued the stranger.

"I—I—I hope so," said Jerry in a very faint voice, trying to be polite, but with his teeth chattering with fear.

(The Adventures of Jerry Muskrat, Chapter 21)

STORY 409. June 5, 1913

The Stranger is Polite.

Oh, tell me, you and you and you
If it mayhap you've ever heard
Of all that wond'rous is and great
The greatest is the spoken word?

It's true. It's the truest thing that ever was. If you don't believe it, you just go ask Jerry Muskrat. He'll tell you it's true, and Jerry knows. You see, it's this way: Words are more than just sounds. Oh, my, yes! They are little messengers, and once they have been sent out, you can't call them back. No, sir, you can't call them back, and sometimes that is a very sad thing, because—well, you see, these little messengers always carry something to someone else, and that something may be anger or hate or fear or an untruth, and it is these things which make most of the trouble in this world. Or that something may be love or sympathy or helpfulness or kindness, and it is these things which put an end to most of the troubles in this world.

Just take the case of Jerry Muskrat. There he sat on the new dam, which had made the strange pond in the Green Forest, shaking with fear until his teeth chattered, as he watched a stranger very, very much bigger than he climb up on the dam. Jerry was afraid, because he had seen that the stranger could swim as well as he could, and as Jerry had no secret burrows there, he knew that he couldn't get away from the stranger if he wanted to. Somehow, Jerry knew without being told that the stranger had built the dam, and you know Jerry had twice made a hole in the dam to let the water out of the strange pond into the Laughing Brook. Jerry knew right down in his heart that if he had built that dam, he would be very, very angry with anyone who tried to spoil it, and that is just what he had tried to do. So he sat with chattering teeth, too frightened to even try to run.

"I wish I had let someone else keep watch," said Jerry to himself.

Then the big stranger had spoken. He had said: "Hello, Jerry Muskrat! Don't you know me?" and his voice hadn't sounded the least bit angry. Then he had told Jerry that he was his big cousin, Paddy the Beaver, and he hoped that they would be friends.

Now everything was just as it had been before—the strange pond, the dam, Jerry himself and the big stranger, and the black shadows of the night—and yet somehow, everything was different, all because a few pleasant words had been spoken. A great fear had fallen away from Jerry's heart, and in its place was a great hope that after all there wasn't to be any trouble. So he replied to Paddy the Beaver as politely as he knew how. Paddy was just as polite, and the first thing Jerry knew, instead of being enemies, as Jerry had all along made up his mind would be the case when he found the builder of the dam, here they were becoming the best of friends, all because Paddy the Beaver had said the right thing in the right way.

"But you haven't told me yet what you made those holes in my dam for, Cousin Jerry," said Paddy the Beaver finally

Jerry didn't know just what to say. He was so pleased with his big new cousin that he didn't want to hurt his feelings by telling him that he didn't think that dam had any business to be across the Laughing Brook, and at the same time he wanted Paddy to know how he had spoiled the Laughing Brook and the Smiling Pool. At last he made up his mind to tell the whole story. Paddy listened gravely.

(The Adventures of Jerry Muskrat, Chapter 22, "Jimmy Loses His Fear")

STORY 410. June 6, 1913

Paddy the Beaver.

Paddy the Beaver listened to all that his small cousin, Jerry Muskrat, had to tell him about the trouble which Paddy's dam had caused in the Laughing Brook and the Smiling Pool.

"You see, we who live in the Smiling Pool love it dearly, and we don't want to have to leave it, but if the water cannot run down the Laughing Brook, there can be no Smiling Pool, and so we will have to move off to the Big River," concluded Jerry Muskrat. "That is why I tried to spoil your dam."

There was a twinkle in the eyes of Paddy the Beaver as he replied: "Well, now that you have found out that you can't do that, because I am bigger than you and can stop you, what are you going to do about it?"

"I don't know," said Jerry Muskrat sadly. "I don't see what we can do about it. Of course you are big and strong and can do just as you please, but it doesn't seem right that we who have lived here so long should have to move and go away from all that we love so just because you, a stranger, happen to want to live here. I tell you what!" Jerry's eyes sparkled as a brand new thought came to him. "Couldn't you come down and live in the Smiling Pool with us? I'm sure there is room enough!"

Paddy the Beaver shook his head. "No," said he, and Jerry's heart sank. "No, I can't do that because down there there isn't any of the kind of food I eat. Besides, I wouldn't feel at all safe in the Smiling Pool. You see, I always live in the woods. No, I couldn't possibly come down to live in the Smiling Pool. But I'm truly sorry that I have made you so much worry, Cousin Jerry, and I'm going to prove it to you. Now you sit right here until I come back."

Before Jerry realized what he was going to do, Paddy the Beaver dived into the pond, and as he disappeared, his broad tail hit the water such a slap that it made Jerry jump. Then there began a great disturbance down under water. In a few minutes up bobbed a stick, and then another and another, and the water grew so muddy that Jerry couldn't see what was going on. Paddy was gone a long time. Jerry wondered how he could stay under water so long without air. All the time Paddy was just fooling him. He would come up to the surface, stick his nose out, nothing more, fill his lungs with fresh air, and go down again.

Suddenly Jerry Muskrat heard a sound that made him prick up his funny little

short ears and whirl about so that he could look over the other side of the dam into the Laughing Brook. What do you think that sound was? Why, it was the sound of rushing water, —the sweetest sound Jerry had listened to for a long time. There was a great hole in the dam, and already the brook was beginning to laugh as the water rushed down it.

“How do you like that, Cousin Jerry?” said a voice right in his ear. Paddy the Beaver had climbed up beside him, and his eyes were twinkling.

“It—it’s splendid!” cried Jerry. “But—but you’ve spoiled your dam!”

“Oh, that’s all right,” replied Paddy. “I didn’t really want it now, anyway. I don’t usually build dams at this time of year, and I built this one just for fun because it seemed such a nice place to build one. You see, I was traveling through here, and it seemed such a nice place, that I thought I would stay a while. I didn’t know anything about the Smiling Pool, you know. Now, I guess I’ll have to move on and find a place where I can make a pond in the fall that will not trouble other people. You see, I don’t like to be troubled myself, and so I don’t want to trouble other people. This Green Forest is a very nice place.”

“The very nicest place in all the world excepting the Green Meadows and the Smiling Pool!” replied Jerry promptly. “Won’t you stay, Cousin Paddy? I’m sure we would all like to have you.”

“Of course we would,” said a gruff voice right beside them. It was Grandfather Frog.

Paddy the Beaver looked thoughtful. “Perhaps I will,” said he, “if I can find some good hiding-places in the Laughing Brook.”

(*The Adventures of Jerry Muskrat*, Chapter 23, “Paddy the Beaver Does a Kind Deed.”)

STORY 411. June 7, 1913

A Merry Home-going.

The Laughing Brook is merry
And so am I,” cried Jerry
Grandfather Frog said he was too.
And Spotty was, the others knew.

The trees stood with wet feet where just a little while before had been the strange pond in the Green Forest, the pond made by the dam of Paddy the Beaver. In the dam was a great hole made by Paddy himself. Through the Green Forest rang the laughter of the Laughing Brook, for once more the water ran deep between its banks. And in the hearts of Grandfather Frog and Jerry Muskrat and Spotty the Turtle was laughter, for now the Smiling Pool would smile once more, and they could go home in peace and happiness. And there was one more who laughed. Who was it? Why, Paddy the Beaver to be sure, and his was the best laugh of all, for it was because he had brought

happiness to others.

“You beat me up here to the dam, but you won’t beat me back to the Smiling Pool,” cried Jerry Muskrat to Spotty the Turtle.

Spotty laughed good-naturedly. “You’d better not stop to eat or play or sleep on the way then,” said he, “for I shall keep right on going all the time. I’ve found that is the only way to get anywhere.”

“Let us all go down together” said Grandfather Frog. “We can help each other over the bad places.”

Jerry Muskrat laughed until he had to hold his sides at the very thought of Grandfather Frog or Spotty the Turtle being able to help him, but he is very good-natured, and so he agreed that they should all go down together. Paddy the Beaver said that he would go, too, so off the four started— Jerry Muskrat and Paddy the Beaver swimming side by side, and behind them Grandfather Frog and Spotty the Turtle. Now Spotty the Turtle is a very slow traveler on land, but in the water Spotty is not so slow. In fact, it was not long before Grandfather Frog found that he was the one who could not keep up. You see, while he is a great diver and can swim fast for a short distance, he is soon tired out. Pretty soon he was puffing and blowing and dropping farther and farther behind.

By and by, Spotty the Turtle looked back. There was Grandfather Frog just tumbling head first over a little waterfall. He came up choking and gasping and kicking his long legs very feebly. Spotty climbed out on a rock and waited. He helped Grandfather Frog out beside him, and when Grandfather Frog had once more gotten his breath, what do you think Spotty did? Why, he took Grandfather Frog right on his back and started on again.

Now Jerry Muskrat and Paddy the Beaver, being great swimmers, were soon out of sight. All at once Jerry remembered that they had agreed to all go back together, and down in his heart he felt a little bit mean when he looked for Grandfather Frog and Spotty the Turtle and could see nothing of them. So he and Paddy sat down to wait. After what seemed a long time, they saw something queer bobbing along in the water.

“It’s Grandfather Frog,” cried Paddy the Beaver.

“No, it’s Spotty the Turtle,” said Jerry Muskrat.

“It’s both,” replied Paddy, beginning to laugh.

Just then Spotty tumbled over another waterfall which he hadn’t seen, and of course Grandfather Frog went with him and lost his hold on Spotty’s back.

“I have an idea!” cried Paddy.

“What is it?” asked Jerry.

“Why, Grandfather Frog can ride on my flat tail,” replied Paddy, “and then we’ll go slow enough for Spotty to keep up with us.”

And so it was that just as the first moonbeams kissed the Smiling Pool, out of the

Illustrations. June 2 to June 7, 1913.



406. Jerry Muskrat has a Busy Day



407. Jerry Muskrat Has a Disappointment



408. Jerry Muskrat Keeps Watch



409. The Stranger is Polite



410. Paddy the Beaver



411. A Merry Home-going

Laughing Brook swam the merriest party that ever was seen.

“Chugarum!” said Grandfather Frog. “It is good to be home, but I think I would travel often, if I could have the tail of Paddy the Beaver for a boat.”

(The Adventures of Jerry Muskrat, Chapter 24)

STORY 412. June 9, 1913

Paddy the Beaver Decides to Stay.

The fair Green Meadows spreading wide,
The Smiling Pool and Laughing Brook
They fill our hearts with joy and pride;
We love their every hidden nook.

So said Jerry Muskrat, as he climbed up on the Big Rock in the middle of the Smiling Pool, with Paddy the Beaver beside him, and watched the dear Smiling Pool dimpling and smiling in the moonlight, as he had so often seen it before the great trouble had come.

“Chugarum!” said Grandfather Frog in his great deep voice from the bulrushes. “One never knows how great their blessings are until they have been lost and found again.”

The bulrushes nodded, as if they too were thinking of this. You see their feet were once more in the cool water. Paddy the Beaver seemed to understand just how everyone felt, and he smiled to himself as he saw how happy these new friends of his were.

“It surely is a very nice place here, and I don’t wonder that you couldn’t bear to leave it,” said he. “I’m sorry that I made you all that trouble and worry, but you see I didn’t know.”

“Oh, that’s all right,” replied Jerry Muskrat, who was now very proud of his big cousin. “I hope that now you see how nice it is, you will stay and make your home here.”

Paddy the Beaver looked back at the great black shadow which he knew was the Green Forest. Way over in the middle of it he heard the hunting call of Hooty the Owl. Then he looked out over the Green Meadows, and from way over on the far side of them sounded the bark of Reddy Fox, and it was answered by the deep voice of Bowser the Hound up in Farmer Brown’s dooryard. For some reason that last sound made Paddy the Beaver shiver a little, just as the voice of Hooty the Owl made the smaller people of the Green Forest and the Green Meadows shiver when they heard it. Paddy wasn’t afraid of Hooty or of Reddy Fox, but Bowser’s great voice was new to him, and somehow the very sound of it made him afraid. You see, the Green Meadows were so strange and open that he didn’t feel at all at home, for he dearly loves the deepest part of the Green Forest.

“No,” said Paddy the Beaver, “I can’t possibly live here in the Smiling Pool. It is a

very nice pool, but it wouldn't do at all for me, Cousin Jerry. I wouldn't feel safe here a minute. Besides, there is nothing to eat here."

"Oh, yes, there is," Jerry Muskrat interrupted. "There are lily-roots and the nicest fresh-water clams and—"

"But there are no trees," said Paddy the Beaver, "and you know I have to have trees."

Jerry stared at Paddy as if he didn't understand. "Do—do you eat trees?" he asked finally.

Paddy laughed. "Just the bark," said he, "and I have to have a great deal of it."

Jerry looked as disappointed as he felt. "Of course you can't stay then," said he, "and—and I had thought that we would have such good times together."

Paddy's eyes twinkled. "Perhaps we may yet," said he. "You see I have about made up my mind that I will stay a while along the Laughing Brook in the Green Forest, and you can come to see me there. On our way down I saw a very nice hole in the bank that I think will make me a good house for the present, and you can come up there to see me. But if I do stay, you and Grandfather Frog and Spotty the Turtle must keep my secret. No one must know that I am there. Will you?"

"Of course we will!" cried Jerry Muskrat and Grandfather Frog and Spotty the Turtle together.

"Then I'll stay," said Paddy the Beaver, diving into the Smiling Pool with a great splash.

(The Adventures of Jerry Muskrat, Chapter 25)

STORY 413. June 10, 1913

The Strange Voice.

"Listen!" It was Jimmy Skunk speaking. He had just met Peter Rabbit half way down the Crooked Little Path just where the moonlight was brightest. But he did not need to tell Peter to listen. Peter was listening—listening with all his might. He was sitting up very straight and his long ears were turned in the direction of the strange sound. Just then it came again, a sound such as neither Peter Rabbit nor Jimmy Skunk had ever heard before. Peter's teeth began to chatter. "Wha—wha—what is it?" he whispered.

"I don't know unless it is Hooty the Owl gone crazy," replied Jimmy.

"No," said Peter, "it isn't Hooty the Owl. Hooty never could make such a noise as that."

"Maybe it's Dippy the Loon. I've heard him on the Big River and he sounds just as if he had gone crazy," replied Jimmy.

"No," said Peter, looking behind him nervously. "No, it isn't Dippy the Loon,

for Dippy never leaves the water, and that voice came from the Green Meadows. I wouldn't be surprised—" Peter didn't finish, for just then the strange voice sounded again, and it was nearer than before. Never had the Green Meadows or the Green Forest heard anything like it. It sounded something like Hooty the Owl and Dippy the Loon and a little yelping dog all together, and there was something in the sound that made little cold chills run up and down Peter Rabbit's backbone. He crept a little closer to Jimmy Skunk.

"I believe it is Farmer Brown's boy and some of his friends laughing and shouting together," said Jimmy.

"No, it isn't! Farmer Brown's boy and his friends can make some dreadful noises, but nothing so dreadful as that. It makes me afraid, Jimmy Skunk," said Peter.

"Pooh! You're afraid of your own shadow!" replied Jimmy Skunk, who isn't much afraid of anything. "Let's go down there and find out what it is." Peter's big eyes grew rounder than ever with fright at the very thought. "D-d-don't you think of such a thing. Jimmy Skunk! D-d-don't y-y-you think of such a thing!" he chattered. "I know it's something terrible. Oh dear! wish I was safe at home in the dear old briar patch."

Again sounded the strange voice, or was it voices? It seemed sometimes as if there were two or three together. Then again it sounded like only one. Each time Peter Rabbit crept a little closer to Jimmy Skunk. Pretty soon even Jimmy began to feel a little uneasy.

"I'm going home," said he suddenly.

"I want to, but I don't dare to," said Peter, shaking all over with fright.

"Pooh! Anyone who can run as fast as you can ought not to be afraid," said Jimmy. "But if you really are afraid you can come up to my house and stay a while," he added good naturedly.

"Oh," thank you, Jimmy Skunk, I believe I will come and sit on your doorstep if you don't mind," cried Peter.

So together they went up to Jimmy Skunk's house and sat on his doorstep in the moonlight and listened to the strange voice all the long night, and then when he saw Old Mother West Wind coming down from the Purple Hills in the early dawn Peter Rabbit got courage enough to start for his home in the dear old briar patch.

(The Adventures of Old Man Coyote, Chapter 1)

STORY 414. June 11, 1913.

Peter Rabbit's Run For Life

It was very early in the morning when Old Mother West Wind came down from the Purple Hills with her big bag, out of which she emptied her children, the Merry Little

Breezes, to play on the Green Meadows. Peter Rabbit, watching her from the doorstep of Jimmy Skunk's house, felt his courage grow and grow. All the night long he and Jimmy Skunk had sat on the doorstep listening to a strange voice, a terrible voice, Peter had thought. But with the first light of the coming day the voice had been heard no more, and now as Peter watched Old Mother West Wind, just as he had so often watched her before, he began to wonder if that dreadful voice hadn't been a bad dream.

So he bade Jimmy Skunk good-by and started for his home in the dear old briar patch and tried to think himself very brave. He wanted to run just as fast as he knew how, but he didn't. No, sir, he didn't. That is, not while he was in sight of Jimmy Skunk. You see he knew that Jimmy would laugh at him. He wasn't brave enough to be laughed at. You know very few people are.

The bravest boy is not the one
Who does some mighty deed;
Who risks his very life, perchance,
To serve another's need.
The bravest boy is he who dares
To face the scornful laugh
For doing what he knows is right,
Though others mock and chaff.

But as soon as Peter was sure that Jimmy Skunk could no longer see him, he began to hurry, and the nearer he got to the old briar patch, the faster he hurried. He would run a little way as fast as he could, lipperty-lipperty-lip, and then stop and look and listen nervously. Then he would do it all over again. It was one of these times when he was listening that Peter thought he heard a soft footstep behind him. It sounded very much like the footstep of Reddy Fox. Peter crouched down very low and sat perfectly still, holding his breath and straining his ears.

There it was again, pit-a-pat, pit-a-pat, very soft and coming nearer. Peter waited no longer. He sprang forward with a great leap and started for the old briar patch as fast as he could go, which you know, is very fast indeed.

As he ran, he saw behind him a fierce, grinning face. It was very much like the face of Reddy Fox, only larger and fiercer and gray instead of red. Never in all his life had Peter run as he was running now. It seemed as if those great long legs of his hardly touched the ground. But, oh, dear, the briar patch was such a long way off! Peter knew that he was running for his life. He didn't dare try any of the tricks with which he had so often fooled Reddy Fox, for he didn't know anything about this terrible stranger behind him and he might not be fooled by tricks.

Peter began to breathe hard. It seemed to him that he could feel the hot breath of the fierce stranger. And right down inside Peter somehow felt sure that this was the owner of the strange voice which had so frightened him in the night. Snap! That was a pair of cruel jaws right at his very heels. The dear old briar patch, the safe old briar patch, was just ahead. With three mighty jumps Peter reached the opening of one of his own private little paths and dived under a bramble bush. And even as he did so he heard the clash of sharp teeth and felt some hair pulled from his tail. And, outside the

old briar patch broke forth that same terrible voice Peter had heard in the night. He didn't stop to look at the stranger, but hurried to the very middle of the old briar patch, and there he stretched out full length and panted and panted for breath.

(The Adventures of Old Man Coyote, Chapter 2)

STORY 415. June 12, 1913

The Great Fright on the Green Meadows

It was present in the dark, in the night;
It was present in the day, in the light;
All about them everywhere
Every minute fear was there.

It was a dreadful state of affairs. Yes, sir, it certainly was a dreadful state of affairs. All the happiness of the Green Meadows and the Green Forest was gone, and yet here it was the very happiest time of all the year. You see, happiness had been driven out by fear—such fear as not even Grandfather Frog could remember. It was worse than in the days when Ol' Mistah Buzzard had first come sailing 'round and 'round high up in the blue, blue sky and frightened the little people of the Green Meadows almost to death because they thought him a hawk²⁶. But then it was only the littlest people who were frightened. Now it was almost everybody felt fear in his heart—everybody but Prickly Porky the Porcupine, who isn't afraid of anybody or anything, and Digger the Badger.

What were they afraid of? Why, the fact is they didn't know. No, sir, the little people of the Green Meadows and the Smiling Pool didn't know what they were afraid of. Do you know that that is the very worst kind of fear? It is. It is the kind of fear that never lets go of you for a single minute. When you know what you are afraid of you know what to look out for, but when you are afraid and don't know what it is that you fear, then there isn't a single minute when fear isn't with you.

You see it was this way: For several nights a strange voice had been heard. Sometimes it came from the middle of the Green Meadows and sometimes it came from the Green Forest. It was a voice to send little cold shivers up and down the backbone of everyone who heard it, for it was like the voice of Hooty the Owl, and the voice of Dippy the Loon and the voice of a little yelping dog all in one. All the little people who roam about at night had heard it, Bobby Coon and Reddy Fox and Billy Mink and Jerry Muskrat and Prickly Porky and Peter Rabbit and Jumper the Hare and Unc' Billy Possum and Hooty the Owl. And some of the little people who sleep at night had been wakened by it, and had lain awake all the rest of the night shivering and shaking. But no one had seen the owner of the voice except Peter Rabbit, and Peter had a terrible tale to tell of how he had been chased clear to the very edge of the old briar patch in the early morning by a terrible monster who was all teeth that snapped and clashed and had actually pulled some of the hairs out of his tail as he dived into one of his private paths in the old briar patch.

The fact that he was the only one who had seen the stranger made Peter feel very

26 STORY 132, 1912.

important. You see, everyone he met wanted to hear about his narrow escape, and so Peter had to tell the story over and over again. Now, like a great many story tellers, he made the story a little bigger each time he told it.

Besides Peter had been so badly frightened that he hadn't seen very clearly anyway, and so the stranger he described was really more what he imagined than what he really saw. But of course, the other little meadow and forest people didn't know this, and they had been so frightened anyway by the strange voice in the night that they believed everything they heard.

So fear grew and grew and grew in the Green Forest and on the Green Meadows until no one had any appetite, that is no one except Prickly Porky the Porcupine and Digger the Badger. You see Digger had recognized the strange voice, and he had just grinned and gone about his business just as usual. But Digger lives by himself and is rather grumpy anyway, so no one had thought to ask him what he thought about the stranger of whom such terrible stories were told. So what he knew Digger had kept to himself. Thus fear grew greater and greater on the Green Meadows and in the Green Forest day by day.

STORY 416. June 13, 1913.

Reddy Fox Makes a Discovery

Reddy Fox had boasted that he was not afraid of the unknown stranger who had frightened Peter Rabbit so, and whose voice in the night had brought the great fear to the Green Meadows and the Green Forest. But Reddy Fox is always boasting, and a boaster is seldom very brave. Right down deep in his heart Reddy was afraid. What he was afraid of he didn't know. That is one reason that he is afraid. He is always afraid of things that he doesn't know about. Do you know, it is a pretty good plan to be afraid of things you don't know about? Old Granny Fox had taught Reddy that.

"If you are afraid of things you don't know about, and just keep away from them, they never will hurt you," said wise old Granny Fox, and that is one reason that Farmer Brown's boy had never been able to catch her in a trap. But Granny was too smart to boast that she wasn't afraid when she was, while Reddy was forever bragging of how brave he was, when all the time he was one of the greatest cowards among all the little meadow and forest people.

When he had first heard that strange voice little cold chills had chased each other up and down his backbone, just as they had with nearly all the others who had heard it, and Reddy had not gone hunting that night. But Reddy has a big appetite, and a hungry stomach doesn't let one think of much else. So after a day or two Reddy grew brave enough to go hunting. Somehow he had a feeling that it was safer to hunt during the day than during the night. You see it was only after jolly, round, red Mr. Sun had gone to bed behind the Purple Hills that the strange voice was heard, and Reddy guessed that perhaps the stranger slept during the day.

So Reddy started out very early in the morning, stepping as softly as he knew

how, looking behind every bush and tree, and with his sharp little ears wide open to catch every sound. Every few feet he stopped and sniffed the wind very carefully, for Reddy's nose can tell him of things which his eyes do not see and his ears do not hear. And all the time he was ready to run at the first sign of danger. He had left the Green Forest and was out on the Green Meadows, hoping to catch Danny Meadow Mouse, when that sharp little nose was tickled by one of the Merry Little Breezes with a smell that Reddy knew. Reddy turned and went in the direction from which the Merry Little Breeze had come. Just a few steps he went and then he stopped and sniffed.

"Um-m-m," said Reddy to himself; "that smells to me like chicken. It certainly does smell like chicken!"

Very, very slowly and carefully Reddy moved forward in the direction from which that delicious smell came. Every few steps he stopped and sniffed. Sniff, sniff, sniff! Yes, it certainly was chicken. Reddy's mouth watered. A few more steps, and there, a little way in front of him, apparently hidden in a clump of tall grass and bushes, lay a half-eaten chicken. Reddy stopped short and sat down to look at it. Then he looked all around it to see if there was anyone about. Then he walked clear around it in a circle, but he was very careful not to go too near. Finally, he sat down again where he could smell the chicken. His tongue hung out with longing, and water dripped from the corners of his mouth. His stomach said, "To get it," but his head said, "Don't go any nearer; it may be some sort of a trap."

Then Reddy remembered one of the sayings of wise old Granny Fox:

When you are tempted very much
Just turn your back and go away;
Temptation, then, cannot harm you,
But only those who choose to stay.

"I hate to do it, but I guess it's the best way," said Reddy Fox, and turned his back on the chicken and trotted away.

(The Adventures of Old Man Coyote, Chapter 3)

STORY 417. June 14, 1913.

Reddy Fox Consults Bobby Coon

Reddy Fox had turned his back on the half-eaten chicken hidden in a bunch of grass and bushes on the Green Meadows. It had been the hardest thing to do that Reddy could remember, for his stomach fairly ached he was so hungry. But there might be danger there and it was best to be safe. So Reddy turned and trotted away where he could neither see nor smell that chicken. He caught some grasshoppers and he found a family of fat beetles. They were not very filling, but they were better than nothing. After a while he felt better and he curled up in a warm, sunny spot to rest and think. You see he just couldn't get that chicken out of his mind. "It may be that Farmer Brown's boy has set a trap there," said Reddy to himself. Then he remembered that the chicken was half eaten and he knew that it wasn't likely that Farmer Brown's

boy would have a half-eaten chicken unless he had found one that Jimmy Skunk had left near the henyard, and for some reason, he didn't know why, he had a feeling that Jimmy Skunk had not had anything to do with that chicken. The more he thought about it the more he felt sure that that chicken had something to do with the stranger whose voice had brought so much fear to the Green Meadows. The very thought made him nervous and spoiled his sunbath.

"I believe I'll run over and see Bobby Coon," said Reddy, and off he started for the Green Forest.

Bobby Coon had been out all night, but he had not been very far away from his hollow tree, because he, too, had felt little chills of fear when he heard that strange voice, which wasn't the voice of Hooty the Owl or of Dippy the Loon, or of a little yelping dog, yet sounded something like all three together. So Bobby's stomach wasn't as full as usual, and he felt cross and uncomfortable. You know it is hard work to feel hungry and pleasant at the same time. He had just begun to doze when he heard Reddy Fox calling softly at the foot of the tree.

"Bobby! Bobby Coon!" called Reddy.

Bobby didn't answer. He kept perfectly still to try to make Reddy think that he was asleep. But Reddy kept right on calling. Finally, Bobby scrambled up to the doorway of his house in the big hollow tree and scowled down at Reddy Fox.

"Well, what is it?" he snapped crossly. "You ought to be ashamed of yourself to disturb people who are trying to get a little honest sleep."

Reddy grinned. "I'm very sorry to wake you up, Bobby Coon," said Reddy, "but you see I want your advice. I know that there is no one smarter than you and I have just discovered something very important about which I want to know what you think."

The scowl disappeared from Bobby Coon's face. He felt very much flattered, just as Reddy meant that he should feel, and he tried to look very important and wise as he said:

"I'm listening, Reddy Fox. What is it that is so important?"

Then Reddy told him all about the half-eaten chicken over on the Green Meadows, and how he suspected that the stranger with the terrible voice had had something to do with it. Bobby listened gravely.

"Pooh" said he. "Probably Jimmy Skunk knows something about it."

"No," replied Reddy. "I'm sure that Jimmy Skunk doesn't know anything about it. Come over with me and see it for yourself."

Bobby began to back down into his house. "You'll have to excuse me this morning, Reddy Fox. You see, I'm very tired and need sleep," said he.

Reddy turned his head aside to hide a smile, for he knew that Bobby was afraid.

"I'm sure it must have been Jimmy Skunk," continued Bobby. "Why don't you go ask him? I never like to meddle with other people's business."

Illustrations. June 9 to June 14, 1913.



412. Paddy the Beaver Decides to Stay



413. The Strange Voice



414. Peter Rabbit's Run For Life



415. The Great Fright on the Green Meadows



416. Reddy Fox Makes A Discovery



417. Reddy Fox Consults Bobby Coon

And with that Bobby Coon backed down out of sight in the hollow tree.

(The Adventures of Old Man Coyote, Chapter 4)

STORY 418. June 16, 1913

Reddy Fox Visits Jimmy Skunk

“Bobby Coon is afraid! Yes, sir, Bobby Coon is afraid! doesn’t dare go with me to look at that half eaten chicken over on the Green Meadows. He’s a coward, that’s what he is!”

Reddy Fox muttered this to himself as he trotted away from Bobby Coon’s big hollow tree in the Green Forest. Reddy was right and he was wrong. He was right in thinking that Bobby Coon was afraid. Bobby was afraid, but that didn’t make him a coward. You see, he couldn’t see what good it would do him to go see that half-eaten chicken way out there in the Green Meadows so far away from trees. You know, Bobby is like Happy Jack Squirrel—he never feels really safe unless there is a tree close at hand to climb, for Bobby’s legs are not very long, and, though he can run fast for a little distance, he soon gets out of breath. Then he climbs the nearest tree. But if there had been any really good reason for going Bobby would have gone even though he was afraid, and that shows that he wasn’t a coward.

But Reddy Fox likes to think himself very brave, and everyone else a coward, when the truth is Reddy is one of the greatest cowards among all the little meadow and forest people. So he trotted along with his nose turned up in scorn, because Bobby Coon was afraid. He was disappointed, too, was Reddy Fox. You see he had hoped to get Bobby to go with him, and when they got there, to get Bobby to go close to the half-eaten chicken and try and find out who had left it there on the Green Meadows, and what for. Reddy, who is always suspicious, thought that there might be a trap, and if there was, Bobby would find it, and then Reddy would know without running any danger himself. That shows how sly he is. He wouldn’t have cared how much trouble Bobby Coon might have gotten into, so long as he, Reddy Fox, found out what he wanted to know.

But as long as Bobby wouldn’t go there was nothing for Reddy to do but to try the same plan with Jimmy Skunk, and he headed straight for Jimmy Skunk’s house. Now down deep in his heart Reddy Fox hated Jimmy Skunk, and more than once he tried to get Jimmy into trouble. But now as he saw Jimmy sitting on his doorstep Reddy looked as pleasant as only Reddy can. He smiled as if Jimmy were his best friend.

“Good morning, Jimmy Skunk. I’m so glad to see you,” said Reddy. “I hope you are feeling well this morning.”

Now Jimmy had had a good breakfast of fat beetles, and he was feeling very good natured. But he wasn’t fooled by Reddy’s pleasant ways. To himself he thought:

“I wonder what mischief Reddy Fox is up to now,” but aloud he said:

“Good morning, Reddy Fox. You are, looking very fine and handsome this

morning. Of course no one who is as big and brave as you are is afraid of the stranger with the terrible voice who has frightened the rest of us so for the last few nights.”

Now, all the time he was saying this Jimmy knew perfectly well that Reddy was afraid, and he turned his head to hide a smile, as Reddy swelled himself up to look very big and important and replied:

“Oh, my, no! No, indeed: certainly not! I’m not afraid of anybody or anything. By the way, I saw a strange thing down on the Green Meadows early this morning. It was a half-eaten chicken hidden in a clump of grass and bushes. I wondered if you left it there.”

Jimmy Skunk pricked up his ears “No,” said he, “I didn’t leave it there. I haven’t taken a chicken from Farmer Brown’s this spring, and I haven’t been up to his henhouse for more than a week. Who do you suppose could have left it there?”

“I haven’t the least idea, unless—,” Reddy looked this way and that to make sure that they were alone— “unless it was the stranger who has frightened everyone but me,” he finished in a whisper.

Jimmy pricked his ears up more than ever. “Do you really suppose it could have been?” he asked.

“Come down there with me and see for yourself,” replied Reddy. And Jimmy said he would.

(The Adventures of Old Man Coyote, Chapter 5)

STORY 419. June 17, 1913

Jimmy Skunk Goes With Reddy Fox

Jimmy Skunk and Reddy Fox trotted down the Crooked Little Path on to the Green Meadows. Reddy was impatient and in a hurry. But Jimmy Skunk never hurries, and he didn’t now. He just took his time and Reddy Fox had to keep waiting for him. Reddy was nervous and anxious. He kept turning his head this way and that way. He looked behind every little bush and clump of grass. He cocked his sharp ears at every little sound. He sniffed every little breeze. It was very plain that Reddy Fox was ill at ease.

“Hurry up, Jimmy Skunk! Hurry up!” he urged every few minutes, and he had hard work to make his voice sound pleasant.

But Jimmy didn’t hurry. Indeed, it seemed as if Jimmy was slower than usual. The more impatient Reddy grew the slower Jimmy seemed to go. And every time Reddy’s back was turned Jimmy would grin and his sharp, little eyes twinkled with mischief. You see, he knew that despite all his boasting Reddy Fox was afraid, and because he wasn’t afraid himself, Jimmy was getting a lot of fun out of seeing Reddy afraid. Once when Reddy had stopped to look over the Green Meadows, Jimmy stole up behind him very softly and suddenly pulled Reddy’s tail. Reddy sprang forward with a frightened yelp and started to run as only Reddy can. Then he heard Jimmy Skunk laughing and

knew that Jimmy had played a joke on him. He stopped short and whirled around.

“What are you laughing at, Jimmy Skunk?” he shouted angrily.

“Oh, nothing, nothing at all,” replied Jimmy, and his face was as sober as if he never had laughed and never could laugh. Reddy opened his mouth to say something ugly, but suddenly remembered that if he quarreled with Jimmy Skunk, then Jimmy wouldn’t go any farther with him. So he gulped down his anger as best he could and grinned sheepishly while he waited for Jimmy to catch up with him.

So at last they came to the bunch of grass and bushes in which Reddy had left found the half-eaten chicken that morning. There it lay just as Reddy had left it. Reddy stopped at a safe distance and pointed it out to Jimmy Skunk. Jimmy looked at it thoughtfully.

“Who do you suppose could have brought it away down here on the Green Meadows?” whispered Reddy as if he was afraid that someone might overhear him.

Jimmy Skunk scratched his head as if thinking very hard. “It might have been Redtail the Hawk,” said he at last.

“That’s so. I didn’t think of him,” replied Reddy.

“But it looks to me as if it was left there in the night, and Redtail never hunts at night, because his eyes are for seeing in the daytime and not in the dark,” added Jimmy Skunk. “Let’s go closer and perhaps we can tell who left it there.”

“Of course. That’s a good idea,” replied Reddy, starting forward as if he was going to walk right up to the chicken. After a few steps he stopped as if he had a sudden thought.

“I tell you what,” said he, “one of us better keep watch to see that no danger is near. I am taller than you and can see over the grass better than you can, so I’ll keep watch while you see what you can find out.”

Now, Jimmy Skunk saw through Reddy’s plan right away, but Jimmy wasn’t afraid, because he isn’t afraid of much of anything. So he agreed to Reddy’s plan, and, leaving Reddy to keep watch, he carefully made his way to the half-eaten chicken hidden in the clump of grass and bushes. All the time he kept his eyes wide open for traps. But there were no traps there. He was gone a long time and when at last he came out his face was very sober.

“Well, was it Redtail the Hawk?” asked Reddy eagerly.

“No,” said Jimmy. “No, it wasn’t Redtail the Hawk or Hooty the Owl. It was someone with teeth very much like yours, Reddy Fox, only bigger, and with feet very much like yours, only these were bigger, too. And the chicken wasn’t one of Farmer Brown’s at all; it was brought from somewhere farther away than Farmer Brown’s, and that shows that it was someone smarter than you, Reddy Fox, because whoever it was

knew that if they stole a chicken from Farmer Brown's boy and Bowser the Hound would come looking for it."

(The Adventures of Old Man Coyote, Chapter 6)

STORY 420. June 18, 1913.

A Call on Digger the Badger

For fox or man the better plan
With unknown danger near,
Is to go home and no more roam
Until the way be clear.

That is what Reddy Fox thinks. The thought popped right into his head when Jimmy Skunk told him that the half-eaten chicken had been left on the Green Meadows by someone with teeth and feet very like Reddy's own, but bigger. Reddy had pretended not to believe it. "Pooh!" said he. "How do you know that this stranger has feet like mine, only bigger? You haven't seen him, have you?"

"No," said Jimmy Skunk, shaking his head. "No, I haven't seen him and I don't need to, to know that. His footprints are right over here in the sand. Come, look for yourself, Reddy Fox."

"No, thanks!" said Reddy hastily. "The fact is I have some very important matters to look after in the Green Forest, and I must hurry along. You'll excuse me, won't you, Jimmy Skunk?"

If you say that there are footprints like mine, only larger, of course I believe it. I would stop to look at them if I could, but I find that I am already very late. By the way, if you will look a little closer at these footprints, I think you will find that they were made by a dog. I'm sorry I can't wait for you, but you are such a slow walker that I really haven't the time. Let me know if you find out anything about this stranger."

And with that off he started for the Green Forest.

Jimmy Skunk grinned, for he knew that Reddy had nothing more important to attend to than to get away as fast as he could from a place which he felt might be dangerous.

"Don't fool yourself, Reddy Fox, by thinking I don't know the footprints of a dog when I see them. Besides, I smelled of them, and they don't smell of dog!" shouted Jimmy before Reddy could get out of hearing.

Jimmy watched Reddy out of sight and chuckled as he saw Reddy keep turning to look over his shoulder as if he expected to find something terrible at his heels.

"I'd never run away until I know what I was running from!" exclaimed Jimmy with the greatest scorn. "Did you ever see such a coward?"

With Reddy gone, Jimmy's thoughts came back to the queer things which were driving all the happiness from the Green Meadows at the very happiest time of the year.

There was that strange, terrible voice in the night, the voice that was not that of Hooty the Owl or Dippy the Loon or a little yelping dog, yet which sounded something like all three. And here was this half-eaten chicken hidden in the club of grass and bushes on the Green Meadows by someone with teeth and feet very much like those of Reddy Fox, only bigger.

It was all very queer, very queer, indeed. The more he thought about it, the more Jimmy felt sure that the owner of the terrible voice was the owner of the big teeth and the maker of the strange footprints. He was scratching his head as he puzzled over the matter, when he happened to look over to the home of Digger the Badger. Jimmy's eyes brightened.

"I believe I'll make a call on Digger. Perhaps he will know something about it," said he, and off he started.

Digger the Badger sat on his doorstep. He has very few friends, for he is grumpy and very apt to be out of sorts. Besides, most of the little Meadow people are afraid of him. But Jimmy Skunk isn't afraid of anyone but Farmer Brown's boy, and not even of him unless he has his terrible gun. So he walked right up to the doorstep where Digger the Badger was sitting.

"Good morning," said Jimmy politely.

"Morning," grunted Digger the Badger.

"What do you think of the queer doings on the Green Meadows?" asked Jimmy.

"What queer doings?" asked Digger.

Then Jimmy Skunk told all about the strange voice and the strange footprints.

Digger the Badger didn't say a word until Jimmy was through. Then he chuckled.

"Why," said he, "that is only my old friend from the Great West—Old Man Coyote."

(The Adventures of Old Man Coyote, Chapter 7)

STORY 421. June 19, 1913

Old Man Coyote Makes Himself at Home

It was out at last. Digger the Badger had told Jimmy Skunk who it was that had so frightened the little people of the Green Forest and the Green Meadows with his terrible voice, and Jimmy Skunk had straight-way sent the Merry Little Breezes of Old Mother West Wind over to the Smiling Pool, up along the Laughing Brook, through the Green Forest and over the Green Meadows to tell the news that it was Old Man Coyote from the Great West who had come to make his home on the Green Meadows. And that night when they heard his voice somehow it didn't sound so terrible. You see they knew what it was, and that made all the difference in the world.

The shivers still might crawl and creep

And chase away good friendly Sleep.
But knowing whom he had to fear
Brought to each heart a bit of cheer.

That may seem queer, but it was so. You see, not knowing what or whom to be afraid of made the little meadow and forest people afraid every minute of the time, afraid to sleep, afraid to put their noses out of their homes, almost afraid to draw a long breath. But now that they knew it was Old Man Coyote who had so frightened them, they felt better, for Digger the Badger, who had known him in the Great West, where they had been neighbors, had told Jimmy Skunk what he looked like and Jimmy Skunk had spread the news so that everybody would know him when they saw him. So, though each one knew that he mustn't give Old Man Coyote a chance to catch him, each felt sure right down in his heart that all he had to do was to be just a little bit smarter than Old Man Coyote, and he would be safe.

Of course, it didn't take Old Man Coyote long to discover that he had been found out. He grinned to himself, stretched and yawned, and then came out from his secret hiding place.

"I think I'll call on my neighbors," said he, and trotted along the Lone Little Path toward the house of Digger the Badger. The Merry Little Breezes saw him first, and in a great flutter of excitement they hurried this way and that way to tell everybody that the stranger from the Great West had come out in the light of day. My, my, my! such a scampering as there was for a safe place from which to peep out at him! He pretended not to know, and didn't look this way or that way, but trotted on about his own business.

Digger the Badger was sitting on his doorstep, and he grinned when he saw Old Man Coyote coming.

"It's about time you called on your old friends," said he.

It was Old Man Coyote's turn to grin. "That's so, Brother Badger," he replied, "but the fact is I've been living very quiet."

"Excepting at night," said Digger, showing all his teeth in a broad grin. "Your voice certainly has sounded good to me."

"I guess it's the first time," interrupted Old Man Coyote.

"The first time I heard it I thought I was dreaming," continued Digger, just as if he hadn't heard what Old Man Coyote said. "Seems just like home to have you about. But tell me, how does happen that you have come here out of the Great West?"

"That's too long a story to tell now. Anyway, I might ask you the same thing. But here I am, and I believe I'll stay. I like the Green Meadows and the Green Forest. Now I must be going along to call on the rest of my neighbors. I hope they'll be glad to see me."

Old Man Coyote grinned when he said this, for no one knew better than he did how very much afraid of him his new neighbors were.

“Come again when you can stop longer,” said Digger the Badger.

“I will,” replied Old Man Coyote, starting toward the Smiling Pool.

(The Adventures of Old Man Coyote, Chapter 8)

STORY 422. June 20, 1913

Old Man Coyote Meets Reddy Fox

No matter how you feel inside,
Hold up your head! Call up your pride!
Stand fast! Look brave! Then none will guess
The fear you feel but won't confess.

Jimmy Skunk learned this when he was a very little fellow. Now he isn't afraid of much of anything, but there was a time when he was. Oh, my, yes! There was a time when he first started out to see the world, and before he had found out that all the world is afraid of that little bag of scent he always carries with him, when Jimmy often was as frightened as Peter Rabbit ever is, and you know Peter is very easily frightened. But Jimmy used to think of that little verse, and though sometimes he had to shut his mouth as tightly as he knew how to keep his teeth from chattering with fear, he would hold up his head, stand fast, and look brave. What do you think happened? Why, in a little while people began to say that Jimmy Skunk wasn't afraid of anything, and so no one tried to bother him. Of course when he found this out, Jimmy wasn't afraid.

But Reddy Fox is different. He dearly loves to tell how brave he is. He brags and boasts. But when he finds himself in a place where he is afraid, he shows it. Yes, sir; he shows it. Reddy Fox has never learned to stand fast and look brave. When Reddy had first been told that the stranger with the voice which had sounded so terrible in the night was Old Man Coyote from the Great West, and that he had decided to make his home on the Green Meadows, Reddy had said, “Pooh! I'm not afraid of him!” and had swelled himself up and strutted back and forth as if he really meant it. But all the time Reddy took care, the very greatest care to keep out of the way of Old Man Coyote.

Of course someone told Digger the Badger what Reddy had said, and Digger told Old Man Coyote, who just grinned and said nothing. But he noticed how careful Reddy was to keep out of his way, and he made up his mind that he would like to meet Reddy and find out just how brave he really was. So one moonlight night he hid behind a big log near one of Reddy's favorite hunting places. Pretty soon Reddy came tiptoeing along, watching for foolish young mice. Just a little while before he had heard the voice of Old Man Coyote way over on the edge of the Old Pasture, so he never once thought of meeting him here. Just as he passed the end of the old log a deep voice in the black shadow said:

“Good evening, Brother Fox.”

Reddy whirled about and his heart seemed to come right up in his throat. It was too late to run for there was Old Man Coyote right in front of him. Reddy tried to swell

himself up just as he so often did before the little people who were afraid of him, but somehow he couldn't.

"Go-good evening, Mr. Coyote," he replied, but his voice sounded very weak. "I hear you've come to make your home on the Green Meadows. I-I hope we will be the best of friends."

"Of course we will," replied Old Man Coyote. "I'm always the best of friends with those who are not afraid of me, and I hear that you are not afraid of anybody."

"N-no. I-I'm not afraid of anybody," said Reddy, "Everybody is afraid of me."

All the time he was speaking he was slowly backing away, and in spite of his bold words he was shaking with fear. Old Man Coyote saw it and he chuckled to himself.

"I'm not, Brother Fox!" he snapped suddenly, in a deep, horrid sounding voice. "Gr-r-r-r-r, I'm not!" As he said it all the hair along his back stood on end, and he showed all his great cruel looking teeth.

Instead of holding his ground as Jimmy Skunk would have done, Reddy leaped backward, tripped over his own tail, fell, and then scrambled to his feet with a frightened yelp, and ran as he had never run before in all his life. And as he ran, he heard Old Man Coyote laughing, and all the Green Meadows and the Green Forest heard it.

"Ho, ho, ho! Ha, ha, ha! Hee, hee, hee! Ho, ha, hee, ho! Reddy Fox isn't afraid! Ho, Ho!"

Reddy ground his teeth in rage, but he kept on running.

(The Adventures of Old Man Coyote, Chapter 9)

STORY 423. June 21, 1913

Granny Fox Visits Prickly Porky

I've often heard old Granny say
He longest lives who runs away.

Reddy Fox didn't realize that he was speaking aloud. He was trying to make himself think that he wasn't a coward and that in running away from Old Man Coyote he had done only what every one of the little meadow and forest people would have done in his place. So without knowing it he had spoken aloud.

But he who runs must leave behind
His self-respect and peace of mind.

The voice came from right over Reddy's head, but he didn't have to look up to know who was there. It was Sammy Jay, of course. Sammy is always on hand when he isn't wanted, and Reddy knew by the look in his eyes that Sammy had seen the meeting with Old Man Coyote.

"What are you waiting around here for?" asked Reddy with a snarl.

Illustrations. June 16 to June 21, 1913.



418. Reddy Fox Visits Jimmy Skunk



419. Jimmy Skunk Goes With Reddy Fox



420. A Call on Digger the Badger



421. Old Man Coyote Makes Himself At Home



422. Old Man Coyote Meets Reddy Fox



423. Granny Fox Visits Prickly Porky

“To tell old Granny Fox how brave you are,” retorted Sammy Jay, his eyes sparkling with mischief, “and how fast you can run.”

“You better mind your own affairs and leave mine alone. I shall tell Granny all about it myself, any way,” snapped Reddy.

Now, when Reddy said that he didn’t tell the truth, for he had no intention of telling old Granny Fox of how he had run from Old Man Coyote, but hardly were the words out of his mouth when old Granny Fox herself stepped out from behind a bush. She had been up in the Old Pasture for a week or two and had just come back, so she knew nothing of the fright which Old Man Coyote had given the Green Meadows and the Green Forest.

“I’m ready to listen right now, Reddy,” said she.

Reddy hung his head. He coughed and cleared his throat, and tried to think of some way out of it. But it was of no use. There sat Sammy Jay ready to tell if he didn’t, and so, mumbling so low that twice Granny told him to speak louder, Reddy told how he had run and how Old Man Coyote had laughed at him so that all the little people in the Green Forest and on the Green Meadows had heard.

“Of course he laughed!” snapped old Granny Fox. “You’re a coward. Reddy Fox, just plain coward. It’s all well enough to run away when you know you have to, but to run before there is anything to be afraid of shows you are the biggest kind of a coward. Bah! Get out of my sight!”

Reddy slunk away muttering to himself and glaring angrily at Sammy Jay who was chuckling with delight to see Reddy looking so uncomfortable. Old Granny Fox made sure that Reddy was out of sight and then she sat down to think, and there was a worried pucker in her forehead.

“Old Man Coyote is a wolf,” said she, talking to herself, “and a wolf on the Green Meadows and in the Green Forest will mean hard hunting for Reddy and me when food is scarce. It is of no use for me to fight him, for he is bigger and stronger than I am. I’ll just have to make all the trouble for him that I can, and then perhaps he’ll go away. I wonder if he has ever met Prickly Porky the Porcupine. I believe I’ll go over and make Prickly Porky a call right now!

And as she trotted through the Green Forest on her way to call on Prickly Porky her thoughts were very busy, very busy indeed. She was planning trouble for Old Man Coyote.

(The Adventures of Old Man Coyote, Chapter 10)

STORY 424. June 23, 1913

Granny Fox Tells Porky a Story

A little tale which isn’t true,
And eager ears to heed it,

Means trouble starts right there to brew,
With tattle-tales to feed it.

No one knows how true this is better than does old Granny Fox. And no one knows better than she how to make trouble for other people by starting little untrue stories. You see she learned long ago how fast a mean little tale will travel once it has been started and so when there is someone with whom she is afraid to fight honestly, she uses these little untrue tales instead of claws and teeth and often they hurt a great deal worse than claws or teeth ever could.

Now you would think that by this time all the little meadow and forest people would have found old Granny Fox out, and that they wouldn't believe her stories. But the truth is, most people are very apt to believe unpleasant of things about other people without taking the trouble to find out if they are true, and old Granny Fox knows this. Besides, she is smart enough to tell these trouble-making untrue stories as if she had heard them from someone else. So, of course, someone else gets the blame for starting them. Oh, Granny Fox is smart and sly! Yes, siree! She certainly is smart and sly.

When Granny heard that Old Man Coyote had come to live on the Green Meadows she knew right away that he belonged to the Wolf family and so was too big and strong for her to fight. But if she couldn't drive him away with her teeth and claws, perhaps she could make so much trouble for him that he would go away. She would try anyway, and all the time she would be careful to be very polite to him so that he would never guess who started the trouble.

It was one of her plans to make trouble that was taking her over to see Prickly Porky the Porcupine. She found him as usual in the top of a poplar tree filling his stomach with tender young bark. Granny Fox strolled along as if she had just happened to pass that way and not as if she had come purposely. She pretended to be very much surprised when she looked up and saw Prickly Porky.

"Good morning. Prickly Porky," she said in her pleasantest voice. "How big and fine and strong and brave you are looking this morning!"

Prickly Porky stopped eating and looked down at her suspiciously, but just the same he felt pleased.

"Huh!" he grunted, then once more he began to eat.

Granny Fox went right on talking. "I said when I heard that story this morning that I didn't believe a word of it. I—"

"What story?" Prickly Porky broke in.

"Why, haven't you heard it?" Granny spoke in a tone of great surprise, "Billy Mink told it to me. He says that this stranger, Old Man Coyote, who has come to the Green Meadows and the Green Forest, has been boasting that he is afraid of nobody, but everybody is afraid of him. When somebody asked him if you were afraid of him, he said that you climbed the highest tree you could find if you but saw his shadow. Of course, I didn't believe it, because I know that you are not afraid of anybody. But other people believe it, and they do say that Old Man Coyote is bragging that the first time he

meets you on the ground he is going to have Porcupine for dinner.”

Prickly Porky had started down the tree before Granny finished speaking and his usually dull eyes actually looked bright. The fact is they were bright with anger.

“What are you going to do?” asked Granny Fox, backing away a little.

“Going to give that boaster a chance to try to get his Porcupine dinner,” grunted Prickly Porky.

Granny turned aside to grin. “I don’t believe you will find him now,” said she, “but I heard that he is planning to get you when you go down to the Laughing Brook for a drink this evening.”

“Then I’ll wait,” grunted Prickly Porky.

So Granny Fox bade him good-by and started on with a wicked chuckle to think how Prickly Porky had believed the story she had made up.

(The Adventures of Old Man Coyote, Chapter 11)

STORY 425. June 24, 1913

Granny Fox Tells Another Story

Believe all the good that you may hear,
But always doubt the bad:
Pass on the word of kindly cheer,
Forget the tale that’s sad.

If everyone would do that what a different world this would be! My, my, my, yes indeed! There wouldn’t be any place for the Granny Foxes that start untrue stories just to make trouble. But we will have to say this much for old Granny Fox, she seldom makes trouble just for the sake of trouble. No, sir, old Granny seldom, very seldom makes trouble unless she or Reddy Fox has something to gain by it. She is too smart and wise for that.

It was just that way now. You see she felt down in her heart that Old Man Coyote the Wolf had no right on the Green Meadows and in the Green Forest. He was a stranger from the Great West and she felt that she and Reddy Fox had the best right there because they had been born there and always had lived there, and she was afraid, very much afraid, that there wouldn’t be room for them and for Old Man Coyote. But she wasn’t big or strong enough to fight him and drive him away, and so the only thing she could think of was to make him so much trouble that he would leave.

She had begun by telling an untrue story to Prickly Porky, a story which had made Prickly Porky very angry with Old Man Coyote, although they had never met. Now she was hurrying down to the Smiling Pool on the banks of which Old Man Coyote was in the habit of taking a sunbath, she had been told.

Sure enough, when she came in sight of the Smiling Pool, there he lay sprawled out in the sun and talking to Grandfather Frog, who sat on his big green lily pad out of

reach from the shore. Granny came up on the opposite side of the Smiling Pool where Old Man Coyote lay.

“How do you do. Mr. Coyote? I have just heard that you have come here to make your home among us, and I am sure we will give you a hearty welcome.”

Granny said this just as if she really meant it, and all the time she was speaking she was smiling.

Old Man Coyote watched her out of half-closed eyes and to himself he thought:

“I don’t believe a word of it. Granny Fox is too polite, altogether too polite. I wonder what kind of a trick she is trying to play now.”

But aloud he said, and his voice was just as smooth and soft and pleasant as Granny’s:

“I’m very well, thank you, and I am much obliged to you for your hearty welcome. I am sure we shall be the best of friends.”

Now, all the time he was saying this Old Man Coyote was chuckling inside, for he knew well enough that they wouldn’t be friends and that Granny Fox didn’t want to be friends. You see, he is quite as sharp as she.

“Yes, indeed, I am sure we shall,” replied Old Granny Fox. “How big and strong you are, Mr. Coyote. I shouldn’t think that you would be afraid of anybody.”

Old Man Coyote looked flattered. “I’m not,” said he.

Granny Fox raised her eyebrows as if very much surprised.

“Is that so?” she exclaimed. “Why, I heard that Prickly Porky the Porcupine is boasting that you are afraid of him and don’t dare put your foot in the Green Forest when he is about.”

Old Man Coyote suddenly jumped to his feet, and there was an ugly gleam in his yellow eyes. Granny Fox was glad that she was on the other side of the Smiling Pool.

“I don’t know who this Prickly Porky is,” said he, “but if you’ll be so kind as to tell me where I can find him, I think I will make him a call at once.”

“Probably he’s taking a nap in the treetop just now,” replied Granny, “but if you really want to meet him, you’ll find him getting a drink at the Laughing Brook, in the Green Forest, late this afternoon. I do hope that you will be careful, Mr. Coyote.”

“Careful! Careful!” snorted he.

“There won’t be any Prickly Porky when I get through with him!”

“Chugarum!” said Grandfather Frog and looked very hard at Old Granny Fox. Granny winked the eye that was nearest to him.

(The Adventures of Old Man Coyote, Chapter 12)

Prickly Porky Has A Bad Day

Prickly Porky is slow to anger, as it is best to be. But when he does grow angry he does not quickly get over it. Now, Chatterer the Red Squirrel will lose his temper all in a minute and the next minute will have forgotten all about it. But Prickly Porky is a long time getting angry and then he is a long time getting over it. When Old Granny Fox had first told him that Old Man Coyote boasted that he would have porcupine for dinner the very first time he met Prickly Porky it had made him just a little bit angry. But after Granny Fox had left him and he thought over what she had told him Prickly Porky's anger began to grow. All day long it grew and grew. It drove away his appetite so that he couldn't eat. He just sat up in the top of a poplar tree and thought about it. Who was this stranger who boasted so? What right had he to say such things when he knew perfectly well that there was no truth in them? He, Prickly Porky, was afraid of no one, not even Farmer Brown's boy, and here was Old Man Coyote, whom he had never seen, boasting that he would dine on porcupine! Anyway, that is what Granny Fox had said. Wasn't it enough to make anyone angry?

The Merry Little Breezes, who are Prickly Porky's best friends, didn't know what to make of it when they found him so grumpy that he didn't answer them at all. They tried to tease him into his usual good nature, but the more they teased the crosser he grew, and pretty soon they wisely gave it up and left him alone. Late that afternoon they returned to see if he was feeling any better. What they saw upset them so that they hardly knew whether to run away or stay.

Prickly Porky had climbed down from the tall poplar tree. He was on the ground and for a few minutes the Merry Little Breezes couldn't make out what under the sun he was doing.

Pretty soon one of them caught a glimpse of Prickly Porky's eyes. Usually they are very dull, but now they fairly snapped. It seemed as if little sparks shot out of them.

"Why," gasped the Merry Little Breeze, "Prickly Porky has lost his temper!"

"And he's losing it more every minute!" whispered another.

Indeed, it really looked as if he was. Every one of the thousand little spears which he usually keeps hidden in his coat was standing on end, which made Prickly Porky look very dangerous. He was grunting and grinding his teeth and making savage little rushes, now forward, now back, now sidewise, just as if he was trying to get at some enemy. The fact is, he was working himself up into a great rage.

After a little he started toward the Laughing Brook, rattling his thousand little spears as he went, and grunting and muttering to himself. The Merry Little Breezes stole along behind to see what it all meant, for never, never had they seen Prickly Porky act like this.

When they came in sight of the Laughing Brook whom should they see but Old Man Coyote sitting there. He looked as if he were waiting for someone, and then the

Merry Little Breezes realized that Prickly Porky was the one he was waiting for.

“Oh!” they cried. “Oh, dear! Someone is going to get hurt!”

STORY 427. June 26, 1913.

The Meeting at the Laughing Brook

The trouble with a quarrel is
That when it's once begun
The whole world tries to push it on
And seems to think it fun.

It usually is anything but fun for those engaged in it, but their neighbors crowd about and urge them on and on and do their best to make matters worse. It was just that way when Prickly Porky and Old Man Coyote met beside the Laughing Brook. Old Granny Fox had started the trouble in the first place by telling untrue stories. She had told Prickly Porky that Old Man Coyote had promised to dine on Porcupine the very first time they met, and she had told Old Man Coyote that Prickly Porky had boasted that Old Man Coyote didn't dare come into the Green Forest while he was there. Of course, both grew very angry, for each believed what had been told him about the other.

Now, until they met beside the Laughing Brook neither had ever seen the other, for you know Old Man Coyote had come out of the Great West, while Prickly Porky had come down from the North Woods. Prickly Porky took one good look and then he grunted. “I'll soon fix him!” he muttered. What he saw was someone who looked something like a very large gray fox or a dog, and Prickly Porky had put too many foxes and dogs to flight to feel the least bit of fear of the stranger grinning at him and showing all of his great teeth.

But Old Man Coyote didn't know what to make of what he saw. Never in all his life had he seen anything like it. He didn't know whether to laugh or to be frightened. About all he could see was what looked like a tremendous great chestnut burr on legs, which came toward him in little rushes and with a great rattling of the thousand little spears which made him look like a chestnut burr. Old Man Coyote had never fought with anybody like this, and he didn't know just how to begin. He didn't like the look of those thousand little spears. The nearer they came the less he liked the look of them. So he backed away a few steps growling and snarling angrily.

Now it seemed that as if by magic the news that there was trouble between Prickly Porky and Old Man Coyote had spread all over the Green Meadows and through the Green Forest. Everybody who dared to go was on hand to see it. Sammy Jay and his cousin, Blacky the Crow, were there, of course, peering down from the top of a pine tree and screaming excitedly. Happy Jack the Gray Squirrel and Chatterer the Red Squirrel actually sat side by side in the same tree, so interested that for once they forgot to quarrel themselves. Unc' Billy Possum and Bobby Coon cut their afternoon nap short and looked on from a safe place in a big chestnut tree.

Danny Meadow Mouse and his cousin, Whitefoot the Meadow Mouse, shivered

with fright while they peeped out through a crack in a hollow log. Peter Rabbit came as near as he dared and looked over the trunk of a fallen tree²⁷. Billy Mink and Jerry Muskrat quietly swam up the Laughing Brook and crawled out on the farther bank, where they could see and still be safe. Of course, Reddy and Granny Fox were there, well hidden so that no one should see them.

And what do you think every one of them was wishing? Why, that Prickly Porky would drive Old Man Coyote away from the Green Forest and off of the Green Meadows. You see, every one of them was afraid of Old Man Coyote, and right down in his heart each was hoping that Prickly Porky would be able to send Old Man Coyote off yelping, with his face stuck full of little spears, as once upon a time he had sent Bowser the Hound²⁸.

(The Adventures of Old Man Coyote, Chapter 13)

STORY 428. June 27, 1913

Slow Wit and Quick Wit.

When Prickly Porky the porcupine and Old Man Coyote, the prairie wolf, met beside the Laughing Brook, it was a case of slow wit meeting quick wit. You see, Prickly Porky is very slow in everything he does, that is, everything but flipping that queer tail of his about when there is an enemy near enough for it to reach. But in everything else he is oh, so slow! He walks as if he had all the time in the world to get to the place he has started for. He climbs in just the same way. And because he never moves quickly, he never thinks quickly. The fact is, he doesn't see any need of hurrying in anything, not even in thinking.

But Old Man Coyote is just the opposite. Yes, sir, he is just the opposite. No one moves quicker than he does. He is nimble on his feet and his wit is just as quick.

His nimble wit and nimble feet
Are very, very hard to beat,

Digger the Badger, who also comes from the Great West, says that to beat Old Man Coyote in anything you should start the day before he does and not let him know it.

So here was Slow Wit facing Quick Wit, with most of the little meadow people and forest folk looking on. Suddenly Old Man Coyote sprang forward with his ugliest snarl, a snarl that made everybody but Prickly Porky shiver, even those who were perfectly safe up in the trees.

But Prickly Porky didn't shiver.

No, sir, he just grunted angrily and rattled his thousand little spears.

Now, Old Man Coyote had sprang with that angry snarl just to try to frighten Prickly Porky, and he had taken care not to spring too close to those rattling spears.

27 "Peter Rabbit" was changed to "Johnny Chuck" in the book version to preserve continuity with upcoming stories, where Peter was not present to witness this meeting.

28 STORY 46, 1912.

When he found that Prickly Porky wasn't frightened the least little bit, he tried another plan. Perhaps he could get Prickly Porky from behind.

As quick as a flash and as light as a feather he leaped right over Prickly Porky and turned to seize him from behind. But he didn't. Oh, my, no! You see the thousand little spears covered every inch of Prickly Porky's back.

Slowly and clumsily Prickly Porky turned so as to face his enemy.

"Got fooled that time, didn't you, Mr. Smarty?" he grunted, while his eyes snapped with anger.

Old Man Coyote didn't say anything. He just grinned. But all the time he was using his eyes, and now he discovered that while Prickly Porky was fully protected on his back and sides by the thousand little spears carried in his coat, there wasn't a single little spear in his waistcoat.

"I've got to get him where I can seize him from underneath," thought he, and straightway he began to run in a circle around Prickly Porky, while the latter turned slowly round and round, trying to always keep his face turned toward Old Man Coyote. Faster and faster ran the wolf, and faster and faster turned Prickly Porky. In his slow mind he was trying to understand what it meant, but he couldn't. And for a while the little meadow and forest people looking on were just as much puzzled. Then suddenly Unc' Billy Possum understood.

"He's trying to make Prickly Porky dizzy," he whispered to Bobby Coon.

"Let's warn Prickly Porky; he'll never think of it himself until it's too late," whispered Bobby Coon.

But before they could do this, the queer performance came to an end. Prickly Porky hadn't discovered what Old Man Coyote was trying to do, but he had become tired of such foolishness and he suddenly decided to take a rest. So he stopped turning around and then curled himself up in a ball on the ground, where he looked like a great chestnut burr. Everybody held their breath to see what Old Man Coyote would do next.

(The Adventures of Old Man Coyote, Chapter 14)

STORY 429. June 28, 1913

Prickly Porky's Tail.

Who on a prickly porcupine
Makes up his mind that he will dine
Must overcome a thousand quills
Before his stomach Porky fills.
And so it is with you and me.
With everybody whom we see.
With Reddy Fox and Billy Mink.
And all the rest of whom we think.

On meadows green, in Smiling Pool,
Or hidden in the forest cool;
The thing we've set our hearts upon
Must past a thousand spears be won.

No one knows better than did Old Man Coyote as he ran 'round and 'round Prickly Porky. He had never felt one of those little spears which Prickly Porky rattled so fiercely, and he had no mind to. You see he didn't like the looks of them. When finally Prickly Porky grew tired of turning round and 'round so as to always face Old Man Coyote, and so lay down and curled up into a great prickly ball, like a huge chestnut burr, Old Man Coyote sat down just a little way off to study how he was going to get at Prickly Porky without getting hurt by some of those sharp, barbed little spears.

For a long time he sat and studied and studied, his tongue hanging out of one side of his mouth. Once he looked up at Sammy Jay and Blacky the Crow and winked, but didn't make a sound. Sammy and Blacky chuckled to themselves and winked back, and for a wonder they didn't make a sound, either. Somehow that wink made them have more of a friendly feeling for Old Man Coyote. You see that wink told them that he was just the same kind of a sly rogue as themselves, and so right away they had a fellow feeling for him.

And none of the little meadow and forest people looking on made a sound. Some of them didn't dare to, and others were so anxious to see what would happen next that they didn't want to. It was so still the little leaves up in the treetops could be heard whispering good night to the Merry Little Breezes, for whom Old Mother West Wind was waiting with her big bag out on the Green Meadows to take them to their home behind the Purple Hills. It was so still that after a while Prickly Porky began to wonder if he was all alone. You see, being curled up that way he couldn't see, and so had to trust to his ears. He waited a little longer, then he uncurled just enough to peep out. There sat Old Man Coyote. Prickly Porky promptly curled up again.

Now the minute he curled up again so that he couldn't see something happened. Old Man Coyote looked up at Sammy Jay and Blacky the Crow and winked once more. Then very softly, so softly that he didn't so much as rustle a leaf, he tiptoed around to the other side of Prickly Porky and sat down just as before.

"Now," thought he, "when he peeps out again, he will think I have gone and then perhaps I can catch him by surprise."

Bobby Coon saw through his plan right away. "Someone ought to warn Prickly Porky," he whispered to Unc' Billy Possum.

Unc' Billy shook his head. "No," he whispered back. "No, Br'er Coon! That wouldn't be fair. It's they-alls' quarrel, not ours; and though Ah done want to see Br'er Porky win just as much yo' do, Ah reckon it wouldn't be right fo' us to meddle. They-all done got to fight it out themselves."

For a long time nothing happened. Then Old Man Coyote grew tired of waiting. Very carefully he crept nearer and nearer, with his nose stretched out to sniff at that prickly ball on the ground. Everybody held his breath, for everybody remembered what

Illustrations. June 23 to June 28, 1913.



424. Granny Fox Tells Porky A Story



425. Granny Fox Tells Another Story



426. Prickly Porky Has A Bad Day



427. The Meeting at the Laughing Brook



428. Slow Wit and Quick Wit



429. Prickly Porky's Tail

had happened to Bowser the Hound when he came sniffing around Prickly Porky; how Prickly Porky's tail had suddenly slapped Bowser full in the face, filling it with sharp little spears; and now they hoped to see the same thing happen to Old Man Coyote, and so they held their breath as they kept their eyes on Prickly Porky's tail.

(The Adventures of Old Man Coyote, Chapter 15)

STORY 430. June 30, 1913

Old Man Coyote's Smartness.

When you meet an adversary
Bold and brave, be also wary.
If the weapons you may hear of,
Teeth and claws, you have no fear of,
Don't be heedless and rush blindly,
Lest you be received unkindly.
And, like Prickly Porky, find him
With a dangerous tail behind him.

Now, Old Man Coyote knew nothing about that dangerous tail. He had never heard how Bowser the Hound had been sent yelping home with his face stuck full of those sharp, little spears. But Old Man Coyote is wary. Oh, my, yes! He certainly is wary. To be wary, you know, is to be very, very careful where you go and what you do until you know for sure that there is no possible danger. And there is no one more wary than Old Man Coyote; not even wise, sly old Granny Fox.

So now, though Prickly Porky curled up in a ball in front of him, looked harmless enough, except for the thousand little spears sticking out all over him, Old Man Coyote was too wary—too smart and too careful—to take any chances as Bowser the Hound had rashly done. And this is why when he stole forward with his nose stretched out as if to sniff of Prickly Porky he suddenly stopped just when the little meadow and forest people looking on were holding their breath and hugging themselves with joy and excitement because they expected to see the same thing happen to him that had happened to Bowser.

Yes, sir, Old Man Coyote stopped. He studied Prickly Porky a few minutes. Then slowly he walked around him, just studying and studying.

"It looks safe enough to go closer and sniff at him," thought Old Man Coyote. "But I learned a long time ago that you cannot always tell just by looks, and that the most harmless looking thing is sometimes the most dangerous. Now, it looks to me as if this stupid Porcupine couldn't hurt a flea so long as he keeps curled up in this way, but I don't know, and I'm not going any nearer until I do know."

He scratched his head thoughtfully, and then he had an idea. He began to dig in the soft earth.

"What under the sun is he doing that for?" whispered Happy Jack Squirrel to his

cousin, Chatterer, the Red Squirrel.

“I don’t know,” replied Chatterer, also in a whisper. “We’ll probably know in a few minutes.”

He had hardly finished when Old Man Coyote threw a lump of the earth so that it hit Prickly Porky. Now, of course, Prickly Porky couldn’t see what was going on, because, you know, he was curled up with his head tucked down in his waistcoat. But he had been listening as hard as ever he could, and he had heard Old Man Coyote’s footsteps very close to him. When the little lump of earth struck him he thought it was Old Man Coyote himself, and like a flash he slapped that queer tail of his around. Of course, it didn’t hit anybody because there was nobody within reach. But it told Old Man Coyote all that he wanted to know.

“Ha, ha, ha!” he laughed. “That’s the time I fooled you instead of you fooling i me! You’ve got to get up early to fool me with a trick like that, Mr. Smarty!”

Then what do you think he did? Why, he just scooped earth onto Prickly Porky as fast as he could dig. Prickly Porky stood it for a few minutes, but he didn’t want to be buried alive. Besides, now that his trick was found out, by the smartness of Old Man Coyote, there was no use in keeping still any longer. So with a grunt of anger Prickly Porky scrambled to his feet, and rattling his thousand little spears, rushed at Old Man Coyote, who just jumped to one side, laughing fit to kill himself.

(The Adventures of Old Man Coyote, Chapter 16)

STORY 431. July 1, 1913

Granny Fox is Found Out.

Granny Fox is sly and wise
And seldom taken by surprise,
But wisdom wrongly put to use
Can never find a good excuse.
It ceases then to wisdom be,
But foolishness, as you shall see.

When Granny Fox had gone to Prickly Porky the Porcupine with an untrue story about how Old Man Coyote had boasted that he would dine on porcupine the first time he met Prickly Porky, and had then gone to Old Man Coyote with an untrue story about how Prickly Porky had boasted that he would drive Old Man Coyote out of the Green Forest, she had thought herself very smart and clever. She knew that both would become very angry and that they would be sure to fight the very first time they met. And she was sure that if they did fight Old Man Coyote would get hurt, for she suspected that he had never met Prickly Porky, and so knew nothing about his terrible little spears. You see, what she wanted was to have Old Man Coyote driven away from the Green Forest and the Green Meadows, for she is afraid of him, and she was also afraid that he would spoil the hunting for herself and Reddy Fox.

Now, with all her smartness and all her cleverness, old Granny Fox made one great mistake. Yes, sir, old Granny Fox made one great mistake. You see, she had become so used to being thought the smartest and cleverest of all the little people who live on the Green Meadows and around the Smiling Pool and in the Green Forest that she had come to believe that there couldn't be anybody anywhere as smart and clever as she. That was because she didn't know Old Man Coyote. And now as she and Reddy Fox watched from their hiding place the meeting between the wolf and Prickly Porky, she felt a sudden sharp sting in her pride. Old Man Coyote had proved himself too smart for Prickly Porky. She ground her teeth as she heard him laughing fit to kill himself, as he kept out of Prickly Porky's reach, and she ground them still more as she heard him say:

"You will boast that you will drive me out of the Green Forest, will you, Mr. Porcupine? The time to brag will be when you have done it."

Prickly Porky stopped short in the middle of one of his clumsy rushes.

"Boaster and bragger yourself!" he grunted. "You don't seem to be dining on porcupine the first time we've met! Why don't you? Why don't you make your own boast good?"

Old Man Coyote stopped laughing and pricked up his ears. "What's that?" he demanded. "What's that? Somebody has been filling your ears with something that is very like a lie, Mr. Porcupine."

"No more than they have yours, Mr. Coyote," replied Prickly Porky, letting his thousand little spears drop part way back into his coat. "But old Granny Fox told me."

"Ha! So it was Granny Fox!" interrupted Old Man Coyote. "So it was old Granny Fox! Well, it was the same old mischief maker who told me that—" He stopped and suddenly looked very hard at the very place where Granny and Reddy were hiding. Then he made a long jump in that direction. Granny and Reddy didn't wait for him.

They started for home so fast that they looked like nothing but two little red streaks disappearing among the trees.

"Ha, ha, ha! Ho, ho, ho! Hee, hee, hee! Ha, ho, hee, ho!" laughed Old Man Coyote, and all the little meadow and forest people who were looking on laughed with him. Then he turned to Prickly Porky. "I guess you and I are going to be friends," said he.

"I guess we are," replied Prickly Porky, and all his little spears dropped out of sight.

(The Adventures of Old Man Coyote, Chapter 17)

STORY 432. July 2, 1913

Granny Fox Grows Thin.

When things go wrong, are in a mess,
Take all the patience you possess,

Don't worry.
Just think of Granny Fox, then grin
Lest you, like Granny, should grow thin,
Don't fret.

Old Granny Fox never was fat. No, sir, Granny Fox never was fat and never wanted to be. She had to do too much running to grow fat. But Granny never had been so thin as she was now, not even in days when food was scarce and she went hungry all the time. She had lost her appetite. Nothing tasted good. She didn't sleep well. Every day she grew thinner and thinner. And it was all because of worry. Old Granny Fox was worrying and fretting herself into a shadow.

You see Granny Fox had always been the smartest and the slyest of all the little people who live on the Green Meadows or in the Green Forest. No one knew it better than she did. But now Old Man Coyote, who had come to make his home on the Green Meadows, was proving himself just as smart and just as sly as Granny. Indeed, though she wouldn't admit it even to herself, right down deep inside Granny suspected that he was even smarter and slyer. And this was what was worrying her. It hurt her pride. Yes, and it made her afraid. Farmer Brown's boy was the only one she had ever been afraid of, and she wasn't afraid of him unless he had his terrible gun with him. Now since she had seen Mr. Wolf, and how much bigger than she he was, and how smart he was, Granny had begun to learn what fear was, the very same kind of fear that she and Reddy had so delighted to put in the hearts of the little meadow and forest people who were smaller than they.

Ever since she had tried to make trouble between Old Man Coyote and Prickly Porky, the Porcupine, and had been found out, she had spent all her time trying to think of some new plan to make trouble for Old Man Coyote. She was stretched out on her doorstep thinking and thinking one morning when Reddy came back for a hunt for meadow mice. Reddy was very much excited. He was so excited that his tongue tripped over itself when he tried to talk. Granny looked up.

"Sit down and hold your tongue for five minutes, then see if you can talk so that you can be understood," she said sharply.

Reddy sat down. He didn't dare do otherwise. Very crestfallen he looked, very crestfallen indeed. But he kept perfectly still, and Granny returned to her thinking just as if Reddy was nowhere about. Finally after what seemed to him a long, long time, but which was really only a few minutes, she said:

"Now if you think you can speak slowly you can tell me what has excited you so."

"I've found the place where Old Man Coyote takes his nap every day," mumbled Reddy solemnly.

Granny pricked up her ears. "How do you know?" she asked shortly.

"Because I saw him there with my own eyes," replied Reddy. "He was taking a sun nap."

"Huh! That doesn't mean that he takes his nap there every day. He may just have

happened to be there today,” retorted Granny.

But Sammy Jay told me that he was there yesterday and the day before and the day before that, for Sammy saw him, replied Reddy humbly

“You can’t believe what Sammy Jay says. Sammy Jay is a mischief maker. I wouldn’t believe anything that Sammy Jay says, for he doesn’t know what the truth is,” grumbled Granny.

“But one of the Merry Little Breezes told me the same thing.” Reddy protested.

“That’s different,” replied Granny and this time she spoke more kindly. “Now you go take a nap and leave me to think.”

So Reddy trotted away to his favorite resting place and old Granny Fox stretched out once more to think, and slowly into her eye crept a look of cunning.

STORY 433. July 3, 1913

The Cunning of Old Granny Fox.

You must get up very early,
You must lie awake at night.
You must have your wits well sharpened
And your eyes must be so bright
That there’s nothing can escape them,
Nothing that you do not see
If ahead of Granny Fox you
Ever get or hope to be.

Happy Jack Squirrel made up that verse one day after he had had, oh, such a narrow escape from Old Granny Fox. It made Happy Jack very sober for a while, for Granny had so nearly caught him that she actually had pulled some hair from Happy Jack’s tail. All the other little forest and meadow people agreed that Happy Jack was quite right.

Most of them had had just such narrow escapes from Old Granny Fox.

You see it is this way: Old Granny Fox is very, very cunning. To be cunning, you know, is to be sly and smart in doing things in such a way that no one else will think of. Just now the thing that Granny wanted most of anything in the world was to drive Old Man Coyote away from the Green Meadows and the Green Forest. She couldn’t do it openly because he was bigger and stronger than she, so she had thought and thought and thought, trying to find some plan which might get Mr. Wolf into trouble so that he would go away and stay away.

When Reddy Fox told her that he had found the place where Old Man Coyote took a sun nap every day, a splendid plan came to Granny. At least it seemed like a splendid plan. The more she thought about it the better it seemed.

But Granny Fox never acts hastily. She is too wise for that. So she studied and

studied this plan that she had thought of. Finally she was satisfied.

"I believe it will work. I certainly do believe it will work," said she, and called Reddy Fox over to her.

"I want you to make sure that Old Man Coyote takes his sun nap in the same place every day," said she. "You must see him there yourself. It won't do to take the word of anyone else for it. I want you to steal up every day and make sure that he is there. Be sure you don't tell anyone, not anyone at all, what you are doing and, above all things, don't let him get so much as a glimpse of you."

Reddy promised that he would take the greatest care, and so for a week every day he crept to a snug hiding place behind a thick clump of grass where we could peep through and see Old Man Coyote taking his sun nap. Then he would tiptoe softly away and hurry to report to old Granny Fox.

"Good!" she would say. "Go again tomorrow and make sure that he is there."

"But what do you want to know for?" Reddy asked one day, for he was becoming very, very curious."

"Never mind what I want to know for," replied Granny severely. "Do as I tell you and you will find out soon enough."

You see, Granny Fox was too cunning to let even Reddy know of her plan, for if no one but herself knew it, it couldn't possibly leak out, and that, you know, is the only way to keep a secret.

(The Adventures of Old Man Coyote, Chapter 18)

STORY 434. July 4, 1913

Bowser the Hound Has a Dream.

Bowser the Hound lay in Farmer Brown's dooryard dozing in the sun. Bowser was dreaming. Yes, sir, Bowser was dreaming. Farmer Brown's boy, passing through the yard on his way to the corn-field, laughed.

"Sick him, Bowser! Sick him! That's the dog! Don't let him fool you this time," said he.

You see, Bowser was talking in his sleep. He was whining eagerly and every once in a while, breaking out into excited little yelps, and so Farmer Brown's boy knew that he was dreaming that he was hunting, that he was on the trail of Reddy Fox or sly Old Granny Fox. His eyes were shut and he didn't hear what Farmer Brown's boy said, and the latter went off laughing, his hoe on his shoulder, for there was work for him down in the cornfield.

Bowser kept right on getting more and more excited. It was a splendid hunt he was having there in dreamland. Across the Green Meadows, along the edge of the Green Forest, and up through the old pasture he ran—all in his dream, you know—and just ahead of him ran old Granny Fox. Not once was he fooled by her tricks, and she tried

every one she knew. For once he was too smart for her, and it made him tingle all over with delight, for he was sure that this time he would catch her.

And then something queer happened. Yes, sir, it was something queer indeed. He saw Granny Fox stop just a little way ahead of him. She sat down facing him and began to laugh at him. She laughed and laughed fit to kill herself. It made Bowser very angry—oh, very angry, indeed. No one likes to be laughed at, you know, and to be laughed at by Granny Fox of all people was more than Bowser could stand. He opened his mouth to give a great roar as he sprang at her, and then—why, Bowser waked up. Yes, sir, he really had given a great roar and had waked himself up with his own voice.

For a few minutes Bowser winked and blinked, for the sun was shining in his eyes. Then he winked and blinked some more, but not because of the sun. Oh, my, no! It wasn't because of the sun that he winked and blinked now. It was because—what do you think? Why, it was because Bowser the Hound couldn't tell whether he was awake or asleep. He thought that he was awake. He was sure that he was awake, and yet—well, there sat old Granny Fox laughing at him just as he had seen her in his dream. Yes, sir, there she sat laughing at him. Poor Bowser! He just didn't know what to think. He rubbed both eyes and looked. There she sat laughing just as before. Bowser closed his eyes tight and kept them closed for a whole minute. Perhaps when he opened them again she would be gone. Then he would know that, she was only a dream fox after all.

But no, sir! When he opened his eyes again, there she was, laughing harder than ever. Just then a hen came around a corner of the house. Granny Fox stopped laughing. Like a flash she caught the hen, slung her over her shoulder and trotted away, all the time keeping one eye on Bowser.

Then Bowser knew that this was no dream fox, but old Granny Fox herself, and that she had had the impudence and boldness to steal a hen right under his very nose! He was awake now, was Bowser—very much awake. With a roar of anger, he sprang to his feet and started after Granny, and with his great deep voice startled the Merry Little Breezes at play on the Green Meadows.

(The Adventures of Old Man Coyote, Chapter 19, "Bowser the Hound has a Visitor")

STORY 435. July 5, 1913

The Clever Plan of Granny Fox.

The bold visit of old Granny Fox to Bowser the Hound in Farmer Brown's dooryard right in broad daylight was all a part of a clever plan Granny had worked out to make trouble for Old Man Coyote. First she had sent Reddy Fox to make sure that Mr. Wolf was taking his usual sun nap in his usual place. If he was, Reddy was to softly steal away and then hurry to the top of the Crooked Little Path where it comes down the hill. When he got there, he was to bark three times. Granny was to be hidden behind the old stone wall on the edge of Farmer Brown's orchard, and when she heard Reddy bark she was to do her part, while Reddy was to hide in a secret place on the edge of

the Green Forest and watch what would happen.

It all turned out just as Granny had planned. She had been in hiding behind the old stone wall only a few minutes when she heard Reddy bark three times. Granny grinned. Then she stole up to Farmer Brown's dooryard, and there she found Bowser the Hound fast asleep and dreaming. Granny sat down in front of him at a safe distance and laughed, for she knew by Bowser's little yelps and eager whines that he was dreaming. She was just getting ready to bark to waken him when he waked himself up with his own voice. Granny had laughed harder than ever when she saw how Bowser didn't know whether he was awake or asleep.

It was just then that a hen happened to walk around the corner of the house. Granny's eyes sparkled.

"Good," said she to herself. "I'll take this hen along with me and Reddy and I will have a good dinner after I have set Bowser to chasing Old Man Coyote," for that was what Granny was planning to do. So she caught the hen, threw it over her shoulder, and started off with Bowser the Hound after her, making a great noise with his big voice.

Now, of course, Granny knew that she couldn't carry that hen very far and keep ahead of Bowser, so she ran straight across the old orchard, toward the secret place on the edge of the Green Forest, where she knew that Reddy Fox was hiding. When she was sure that Reddy could see her, she gave the hen a toss over into the grass and then raced away toward the Green Meadows. You see, she knew that Bowser would keep right on after her, and when it was safe for him to do so, Reddy would steal out from his hiding place and get the hen, and that is just what did happen.

Away ran Granny, and after her ran Bowser, and all the little meadow and forest people heard his great voice and were glad that he was not after them.

But Granny Fox was not worried. You see, she had fooled him so many times that she knew she could do it again. So she kept just a little ways ahead of him and gradually led him toward the place where Old Man Coyote took his sun nap every day. But she was too smart to run straight toward it.

"For," said she to herself, "if I do that, he will become alarmed and run away before Bowser is near enough to see him." So she ran in a big circle around the place, feeling sure that Old Man Coyote would lie perfectly still so as not to be seen.

'Round and 'round ran Granny Fox with Bowser after her, and all the time she was making the circle smaller and smaller, so as to get nearer and nearer to the napping place of Mr. Wolf. When she thought that she was near enough she suddenly darted straight for it.

"Now," thought she, "he'll jump and run, and when Bowser sees him, he will forget all about me. He will follow Old Man Coyote, and perhaps he will drive him away from the Green Meadows forever."

Nearer and nearer to the napping place Granny drew. She was almost to it. Why didn't Old Man Coyote jump and run? At last she was right to it. She could see just where he had been stretched out, but he wasn't there now. There wasn't a sign of him

Illustrations. June 30 to July 5, 1913.



430. Old Man Coyote's Smartness



431. Granny Fox is Found Out



432. Granny Fox Grows Thin



433. The Cunning of Old Granny Fox



434. Bowser the Hound Has A Dream



435. The Clever Plan of Granny Fox

anywhere! What did it mean? Just then she heard a sound over in the Green Forest that made her grind her teeth with rage.

“Ha, ha, ha! Ho, ho, ho! Hee, hee, hee! Ha, ho, hee, ho!” It was the laughter of Old Man Coyote.

(The Adventures of Old Man Coyote, Chapter 20)

STORY 436. July 7, 1913

How Peter Rabbit Helped Old Man Coyote.

A kindly word, a kindly deed,
Is like the planting of a seed;
It first sends forth a little root
And by and by bears splendid fruit.

When Old Man Coyote first came to the Green Meadows to live he chased Peter Rabbit and gave Peter a terrible fright. After that for some time Peter kept very close to the dear old briar patch, where he always felt perfectly safe. But Peter dearly loves to roam and Peter is very, very curious, so it wasn't long before he began to grow tired of the old briar patch and longed to go abroad on the Green Meadows and the Green Forest as he always had done, and to find out all that was going on among his neighbors.

Of course Peter heard a great deal, for Sammy Jay and Blacky the Crow would stop almost every day to tell him the latest news about Old Man Coyote. They told him all about how Granny Fox tried make trouble between Mr. Wolf and Prickly Porky the Porcupine, and how she had been found out. After they had gone Peter sat very still for a long time thinking it all over.

“H-m-m,” said Peter to himself. “It is very plain to me that Old Man Coyote is smarter than Granny Fox, and that means a great deal to me. Yes, sir, that means a great deal to me. It means that I have got to watch out for him even sharper than I have to watch out for Granny and Reddy Fox. Dear me, dear me, just as if I didn't have trouble enough as it is.”

As he talked Peter was sitting on the very edge of the old briar patch looking toward the place where Sammy Jay had told him that Old Man Coyote took his sun nap every day. Suddenly he saw something that made him stop thinking about his troubles and sit up a little straighter and open his big eyes a little wider. It was Reddy Fox creeping very, very slowly and carefully toward the nap-ping place of Mr. Wolf. When he was near enough to see, Reddy lay down in the grass and watched. After a while he tip-toed away back to the Green Forest.

Peter scratched his long left ear with his long left hind foot. “Now, what did Reddy Fox do that for?” he said, thoughtfully. For the rest of the day Peter could think of nothing else, for you know Peter is very, very curious.

The next day and the next day and the day after that he saw Reddy Fox do the

same thing; all the time Peter's curiosity grew and grew and grew. But he didn't say anything about it to anyone, but just puzzled and puzzled over it.

Late that afternoon Peter heard footsteps just outside the old briar patch. Peeping out he saw Old Man Coyote passing. Peter's curiosity could be kept down no longer.

"How do you do, Mr. Coyote?" said Peter in a very small and frightened sounding voice, but in a very polite manner.

Old Man Coyote stopped and peeped through the brambles. "Hello, Peter Rabbit," said he. "I haven't had the pleasure of meeting you outside of the old briar patch for some time." He grinned when he said this in a way that showed all his long sharp teeth.

"No," replied Peter. "I-I-well, you see, I'm afraid of Old Granny and Reddy Fox."

Old Man Coyote grinned again, for he knew all the time that it was himself whom Peter really feared. "Pooh, Peter Rabbit! You shouldn't be afraid of them," said he. "They're not very smart. You ought to be able to keep out of their way."

Peter hopped a little nearer to the edge of the briar patch. "Tell me, Mr. Coyote, what is Reddy Fox watching you for every day when you take your sun nap?"

"What's that?" demanded Old Man Coyote, sharply.

He listened gravely while Peter told him what he had seen. When Peter had finished, Mr. Coyote smiled, and somehow this time he didn't show all those dreadful teeth.

"Thank you, Peter Rabbit," said he. "You have done me a great favor, and I hope I can return it some time. You know, I believe that we are going to be friends?"

And with that Old Man Coyote went on his way chuckling to himself.

(The Adventures of Old Man Coyote, Chapter 21)

STORY 437. July 8, 1913

Why the Clever Plan of Granny Fox Failed.

The best laid plans of foxes fail
Sometimes, and only trouble make,
Just like some plans of girls and boys
Who thought of others seldom take.

When Old Man Coyote, chuckling to himself, left Peter Rabbit and the old briar patch he went straight over to the place where he took his sun nap every day to look around. His sharp eyes soon saw the place where Reddy Fox had been lying in the grass to watch him, for of course the grass was pressed down by the weight of Reddy's body.

"Peter Rabbit told me the truth, sure enough, and I guess I owe him a good turn," muttered Old Man Coyote as he studied and studied to see what Reddy could be up to by watching him every day. You see, he is so sharp and clever himself that he was sure

right away that Reddy had some plan in mind to bring him to the same place every day.

But he didn't let on that he knew anything about what was going on. Oh, my, no! The next day, just as usual, he curled up for his sun nap, only this time he took care to lie in such a way that he would be looking toward Reddy's hiding place. Then he pretended to go to sleep, but if you had been there and looked into his eyes you would have found no sleepy winks there. No, sir, you wouldn't have found a single sleepy wink, not one! Instead, his eyes were as bright as if there was no such thing as sleep. He saw Reddy steal out of the Green Forest. Then he closed his eyes all but just a tiny wee crack, through which he could see Reddy's hiding place; but all the time he looked as if his eyes were shut tight.

Reddy crept as softly as he could, which is very softly indeed, to his hiding place and lay down to watch. Old Man Coyote pretended to be very fast asleep, and every once in a while, he would make believe to snore. But all the time he was watching Reddy. After a little while Reddy tiptoed away until he felt sure that it was safe to run. Then he hurried as fast as he could go to report to old Granny Fox in the Green Forest. Old Man Coyote chuckled as he watched Reddy disappear.

"I don't know what it all means," said he, "but if he and old Granny Fox think that they are going to catch me napping they are making one of the biggest mistakes of their lives."

The next day and the next the same thing happened, but the day after that Reddy only stopped long enough to make sure that Old Man Coyote was there just as usual, then hurried away to the top of the Crooked Little Path that comes down the hill, where he barked three times. Old Man Coyote watched him go and heard him bark.

"That's some kind of a signal," said he to himself, "and unless I am greatly mistaken it means mischief. I think I won't take a nap today, for I want to see what is going on."

With that Old Man Coyote made a very long leap off to one side, then two more, so as to leave no scent to show which way he had gone. Then chuckling to himself, he hurried to the Green Forest and hid where he could watch Reddy Fox. He saw Reddy hide on the edge of the Green Forest, where he could watch Farmer Brown's door yard, and then he crept up where he could watch, too. Of course he saw old Granny Fox when she led Bowser the Hound down across the Green Meadows, and he guessed right away what her plan was. It tickled him so that he had to clap both hands over his mouth as he watched sly old Granny take Bowser straight over to his napping place, and when he saw how surprised she was to find him gone he sat up and laughed until all the little people on the Green Meadows and in the Green Forest heard him and wonder what could be tickling Old Man Coyote so.

(The Adventures of Old Man Coyote, Chapter 22)

Granny Fox Has Another Disappointment.

When old Granny Fox found that Old Man Coyote was not at his usual napping place, she was sure that Reddy Fox must have been very stupid, and thought that he saw him there when he didn't. She hurried to the Laughing Brook and waded in it for a little way in order to destroy her scent, so that Bowser the Hound would not know in which direction she had gone. You know water is always the friend of little animals who leave scent in their footsteps. Bowser came baying up to the edge of the Laughing Brook and there he stopped, for his wonderful nose could not follow Granny in the water, and he could not tell whether she had gone up or down or across the brook.

But Bowser is not one to give up easily. No, indeed! No, indeed! He has learned many of Granny's tricks, and now he knew well enough what Granny had done. At least Bowser thought that he knew.

"She'll wade a little way and then she will come out of the water, so all I have to do is to find the place where she has come out, and there I will find her tracks again," said he, and with his nose to the ground hurried down one bank of the Laughing Brook.

He went as far as he thought Granny could have waded, but there was no trace of her. Then he crossed the brook, and with his nose still to the ground ran back to the starting place along the other bank.

"She didn't go down the brook, so she must have gone up," said Bowser, and started up the brook as eagerly as he had gone down. After running as far as he thought Granny could possibly have waded Bowser crossed over and ran back along the other bank to the starting place without finding any trace of Granny Fox. At last, with a foolish and ashamed air, Bowser gave it up and started for home, and all the time Granny Fox was lying in plain sight watching him. Yes, sir, she was watching him and laughing to herself. You see, she knew perfectly well that Bowser depends more on his nose than on his eyes and that when he is running with his nose to the ground, he can see very little around him. So she had simply waded down the Laughing Brook to a flat rock in the middle of it, and on this she had stretched herself out and kept perfectly still. Twice Bowser had gone right past without seeing her. She enjoyed seeing him fooled so much that for the time being she quite forgot about Old Man Coyote and the failure of her clever plan to make trouble for him.

But when Bowser the Hound had gone, Granny remembered. She stopped laughing, and a look of angry disappointment filled her face as she trotted toward home. But as she trotted along her face cleared a little. "Anyway, Reddy and I will have a good dinner on that fat hen I caught in Farmer Brown's dooryard," she muttered.

When she reached home there sat Reddy on the doorstep, but there was no sign of the fat hen, and Reddy looked very uneasy and frightened.

"Where's that fat hen I caught?" demanded Granny, crossly.

"I—I'm sorry, Granny, but I haven't got it," said Reddy.

“Haven’t got it!” snapped Granny.

“What’s the matter with you, Reddy Fox? Didn’t you see me throw it in the grass when I ran past the place where you were hiding, and didn’t you know enough to go and get it?”

“Yes,” replied Reddy. “I saw you throw it in the grass and I went out and got it, but on my way home I met someone who took it away from me.”

“Took it away from you!” exclaimed Granny. “Who was it? Tell me this instant! Who was it?”

“Old Man Coyote,” replied Reddy in a low, frightened voice.

Old Granny Fox simply stared at Reddy. She couldn’t find a word to say. Instead of making trouble for Old Man Coyote, she had furnished him with a good dinner. He was smarter than she.

(*The Adventures of Old Man Coyote*, Chapter 23, “Old Man Coyote Gets a Good Dinner”)

STORY 439. July 10, 1913

Peter Rabbit Loses His Appetite.

Peter Rabbit had lost his appetite. Now, when Peter Rabbit loses his appetite, something is very wrong with him. Peter has always boasted that he can eat any time and all the time. In fact, the two things that Peter thinks most about are his stomach and satisfying his curiosity, and most of the scrapes that Peter has gotten into have been because of those two things. So when Peter loses his appetite or his curiosity there is surely something the matter with him.

Ever since Old Man Coyote the Wolf had come to live on the Green Meadows Peter had been afraid to go very far from the dear old briar patch where he makes his home, and where he feels safe. Now there wasn’t any reason why he should go far from the old briar patch. There was plenty to eat in it and all around it, for sweet clover grew almost up to the very edge of it, and you know Peter is very fond of sweet clover. So there was plenty for Peter to eat without running any risk of danger. With nothing to do but eat and sleep Peter ought to have grown fat and contented. But he didn’t.

Now that is just the way with a lot of people. The more they have and the less they have to worry about, the more discontented they become and at last positively unhappy. There was little Danny Meadow Mouse living out on the Green Meadows. He was happy all the livelong day, and yet he had no safe castle like the old briar patch where he could always be safe. Every minute of every day Danny had to keep his eyes wide open and his ears wide open and his wits working their very quickest, for any minute he was likely to be in danger. Old Man Coyote or Reddy Fox or Granny Fox or Digger the Badger or Mr. Blacksnake was likely to come creeping through the grass any time, and they were always hungry for a fat Meadow Mouse. And as if that wasn’t worry enough, Danny had to watch the sky, too, for Old Whitetail the Marsh Hawk or his

cousin Redtail or Blacky the Crow, each of whom would be glad of a Meadow Mouse dinner. Yet in spite of all this Danny was happy and never once lost his appetite.

But Peter Rabbit, with nothing to worry him so long as he stayed in the old briar patch, couldn't eat, and grew more and more unhappy.

"I don't know what's the matter with me. I really don't know what's the matter with me," said Peter, as he turned up his nose at a patch of sweet, tender young clover. "I think I'll go cut some new paths through the old briar patch."

Now though, he didn't know it, that was the very best thing he could do. It gave him something to think about. For two or three days he was very busy cutting new paths and his appetite came back. But when he had made all the paths he wanted and there was nothing else to do he lost his appetite again. He just sat still all day long and moped and thought and thought and thought. Now the trouble with Peter Rabbit's thinking was that it was all about himself and how unhappy he was. Of course, the more he thought about this the more unhappy he grew.

"If I only had some one to talk to, I'd feel better, said he to himself. That reminded him of Johnny Chuck and what good times they used to have together when Johnny lived on the Green Meadows. Then he thought of how happy Johnny seemed with his little family in his new home in Farmer Brown's old orchard²⁹ in spite of all the worries his family made him. And right then Peter found out what was the matter with him,

I believe I'm just lonesome," said Peter. "Yes, sir, that's what's the matter with me."

It isn't good to be alone too much,
I've heard my mother say,
It makes one selfish, grouchy, cross and quite unhappy all the day.
One needs to think of other folks and not of just one's self alone
To find the truest happiness and joy, and real content to own

"Now that I've found out what is the trouble with me, the question is, what am I going to do about it?"

(Mrs. Peter Rabbit, Chapter 1)

STORY 440. July 11, 1913

Peter Rabbit Plans a Journey.

The trouble with me is that I'm lonesome," said Peter Rabbit as he sat in the old briar patch. "Yes, sir, that's the only thing that's wrong with me. I'm just tired of myself and that's why I've lost my appetite. And now that I know what's the matter, what am I going to do about it? If I was sure, absolutely sure, that Old Man Coyote meant what he said about our being friends I'd start out this minute and call on all my friends. My, my, my, it seems an age since I visited the Smiling Pool and saw Grandfather Frog and Jerry Muskrat and Billy Mink and Little Joe Otter! Mr. Coyote sounded as if he

29 STORY 356, 1913.

really meant to leave me alone, but, but—well, perhaps he did mean it when he saw me sitting here safe among the brambles, but if I should meet him out in the open he might change his mind and—oh dear, his teeth are terribly long and sharp!”

Peter sat a little longer thinking and thinking. Then a bright idea popped into his head. He kicked up his heels.

“I’ll do it,” said he. “I’ll make a journey! That’s what I’ll do! I’ll make at journey and see the great wide world.

By staying here and sitting still
I’m sure I’ll simply grow quite ill.
A change of scene is what I need
To be from all my troubles freed.

Of course if Peter had really stopped to think the matter over thoroughly he would have known that running away from one kind of trouble is almost sure to lead to other troubles. But Peter is one of those who do their thinking afterward. Peter is what is called impulsive—that is, he does things and then thinks about them later, and often wishes he hadn’t done them. So now the minute the idea of making a journey popped into his head he made up his mind that he would do it, and that was all there was to it. You see, Peter never looks ahead. If he could get rid of the trouble that bothered him now, which, you know, was nothing but lonesomeness, he wouldn’t worry about the troubles he might get into later.

Now, the minute Peter made up his mind to make a journey he began to feel better. His lost appetite returned and the first thing he did was to eat a good meal of sweet clover.

“Let me see,” said he as he filled his big stomach: “I believe I’ll visit the Old Pasture. It’s a long way off and I’ve never been there, but I’ve heard Sammy Jay say that it’s a very wonderful place and I don’t believe it is any more dangerous than the Green Meadows and the Green Forest now that Old Man Coyote and Reddy and Granny Fox are all living here. I’ll start tonight when I am sure that Old Man Coyote is nowhere around, and I won’t tell a soul where I am going.”

So Peter settled himself and tried to sleep the long day away, but his mind was so full of the long journey he was going to make that he couldn’t sleep much, and when he did have a nap he dreamed of wonderful sights and adventures out in the great wide world.

At last he saw jolly, round, red Mr. Sun drop down to his bed behind the Purple Hills. Old Mother West Wind came hurrying back from her day’s work and gathered her children, the Merry Little Breezes, into her big bag, and then she, too, started for her home behind the Purple Hills. A little star came out and winked at Peter, and then, way over on the edge of the Green Forest, he heard Old Man Coyote laugh. Peter grinned. That was what he had been waiting for, for it meant that Mr. Wolf was so far away that there was nothing to fear from him.

Peter hopped out from the dear, safe, old briar patch, looked this way and that way,

and then with his heart in his mouth he started toward the Old Pasture as fast as he could go, lipperty, lipperty, lip.

(Mrs. Peter Rabbit, Chapter 2)

STORY 441. July 12, 1913

Hooty the Owl Changes his Hunting Grounds.

Towhit, towhoo! Towhit, towhoo!
Will some one tell me what to do?
My children have an appetite
That keeps me hunting all the night,
And though their stomachs I may stuff
They never seem to have enough.
Towhit, towhoo! Towhit, towhoo!
Will some one tell me what to do?

Hooty the Owl said this to himself as he sat on the tiptop of a tall dead tree in the Green Forest while the black shadows crept swiftly among the trees. It wouldn't have done him to say it aloud, for then the little people in feathers and fur on whom he likes to make his dinner would have heard him and known just where he was. So he said it to himself, and sat so still that he looked for all the world like a part of the tree on which he was sitting. The only sound he made was once in a while to give his fierce hunting call "Whooo-hoo-hoo, whooo-hoo!" Now, that is a terrible sound in the dark woods, very terrible indeed to the little forest people, because it sounds so fierce and hungry. It make them jump and shiver, and that is just what Hooty wants them to do for in doing it one of them is likely to make just the least scratching with his claws or to rustle a leaf. If he does Hooty, whose ears are very, very wonderful, is almost sure to hear him, and his great yellow eyes see him, and then—why, Hooty has his dinner.

The very night when Peter Rabbit started on his journey to the Old Pasture, Hooty the Owl had made up his mind that something had got to be done to get more food for those hungry babies³⁰ of his up in the big hemlock tree in the darkest corner of the Green Forest. Hunting was very poor, very poor indeed, and Hooty was at his wits end to know what he should do. He had hooted and hooted in vain in the Green Forest, and he had sailed back and forth over the Green Meadow like a great black shadow without seeing so much as a single mouse.

"It's all because of Old Man Coyote and Granny and Reddy Fox," said Hooty angrily. "They've spoiled the hunting. Yes, sir, that's just what they have done! If I expect to feed those hungry babies of mine, I must find new hunting grounds. I believe I'll go up to the Old Pasture. Perhaps I'll have better luck up there."

So Hooty the Owl spread his broad wings and started for the Old Pasture Just a little while after Peter Rabbit had started for the same place. Of course he didn't know that Peter was on his way there, and of course Peter didn't know that Hooty even thought of the Old Pasture. If he had, perhaps he would have thought twice before

³⁰ STORY 346, 1913.

Illustrations. July 7 to July 12, 1913.



436. How Peter Rabbit Helped Old Man Coyote



437. Why the Clever Plan of Granny Fox Failed



438. Granny Fox Has Another Disappointment



439. Peter Rabbit Loses His Appetite



440. Peter Rabbit Plans a Journey



441. Hooty the Owl Changes his Hunting Grounds

starting. Anyway, he would have kept a sharper watch in the sky. But as it was his thoughts were all of Old Man Coyote and Granny and Reddy Fox and that is where Peter made a very grave mistake, a very grave mistake indeed, as he was soon to find out.

(Mrs. Peter Rabbit, Chapter 3)

STORY 442. July 14, 1913

The Shadow with Sharp Claws.

Now, what's the use, pray tell me this,
When all is said and done;
A thousand things and one to learn
And then forget the one?
For when that one alone you need,
And nothing else will do,
What good are all the thousand, then?
I do not see—do you?

Forgetting leads to more trouble than almost anything under the sun. Peter Rabbit knew this. Of course, he knew it. Peter had had many a narrow escape just from forgetting something. He knew just as well as you know that he might just as well not learn a thing as to learn it and then forget it. But Peter is such a happy-go-lucky little fellow that he is very apt to forget, and forgetting leads him into all kinds of difficulties, just as it does most folks.

Now Peter had learned when he was a very little fellow that when he went out at night, he must watch out quite as sharply for Hooty the Owl as for either Granny or Reddy Fox, and usually he did. But the night he started to make a journey to the Old Pasture his mind was so full of Old Man Coyote and Granny and Reddy Fox that he wholly forgot Hooty the Owl. So as he scampered across the Green Meadows, lipperty, lipperty, lipperty, lip, as fast as he could go, with his long ears and his big eyes and his wobbly nose all watching out for danger on the ground, not once did he think that there might be danger from the sky above him.

It was a moonlight night, and Peter was sharp enough to keep in the shadows whenever he could. He could scamper as fast as he knew how from one shadow to another and then sit down in the blackest part of each shadow to get his breath and to look and listen and so make sure that no one was following him.

The nearer he got to the Old Pasture the safer he felt from Old Man Coyote and Granny and Reddy Fox. When he scampered across the patches of moonshine his heart didn't come up in his mouth the way it had at first. He grew bolder and bolder. Once or twice, he stopped for a mouthful of sweet clover. He was tired, for he had come a long way, but he was almost to the Old Pasture now, and it looked very dark and safe, for it was covered with bushes and brambles, "Plenty of hiding places there," thought Peter. "It really looks as safe as the dear old briar patch. No one will ever think to look for me

way off here.”

Just then he spied a patch of sweet clover out in the moonlight. His mouth began to water. “I’ll just fill my stomach before I go into the Old Pasture, for there may not be any clover there,” said Peter.

“You’d better be careful, Peter Rabbit,” said a wee warning voice inside him.

“Pooh!” said Peter. “There’s nothing to be afraid of way up here!”

A shadow drifted across the sweet clover patch. Peter saw it.

“That must be made by a cloud crossing the moon,” said Peter, and he was so sure of it that he didn’t even look up to see, but boldly hopped out to fill his stomach. Just as he reached the patch of clover the shadow drifted over it again. Then all in a flash a terrible thought entered Peter’s head. He didn’t stop to look up. He suddenly sprang sideways, and even as he did so sharp claws tore his coat and hurt him dreadfully. He twisted and dodged and jumped and turned this way and that way, and all the time the shadow followed him, and once again sharp claws tore his coat and made him squeal with pain.

At last, when his breath was almost gone, he reached the edge of the Old Pasture and dove under a friendly old bramble bush.

“O,” sobbed Peter, “I forgot all about Hooty the Owl! Besides. I didn’t suppose he ever came way up here.”

(Mrs. Peter Rabbit, Chapter 4)

STORY 443. July 15, 1913

The Old Pasture.

Peter Rabbit sat under a friendly bramble bush on the edge of the Old Pasture and panted for breath, while his heart went pit-a-pat, pit-a-pat, as if it would thump its way right through his sides. Peter had had a terrible fright. There were long tears in his coat and he smarted and ached dreadfully where the cruel claws of Hooty the Owl had torn him. And here he was in a strange place, not knowing which way to turn, for you know he never had visited the Old Pasture before.

But Peter had had so many narrow escapes in his life that he had learned not to worry over dangers that are past. Peter is what wise men call a phil-oso-pher. That is a big word, but its meaning is very simple. A phil-oso-pher is one who believes that it is foolish to think about things that have happened, excepting to learn some lesson from them, and that the best thing to do is to make the best of the present. Peter had learned his lesson. He was sure of that.

“I never, never will forget again to watch out for Hooty the Owl,” said he to himself as he nursed his wounds, “and so perhaps it is a good thing that he so nearly caught me this time. If he hadn’t, I might have forgotten all about him some time when he could catch me. I certainly shouldn’t have watched out for him way up here,

for I didn't think he ever came up to the Old Pasture. But now I know he does, and Mr Hooty'll have to be smarter than he's ever been before to catch me napping again. My, how I do smart and ache! I know now just how Danny Meadow Mouse felt that time Hooty caught him and dropped him into the old briar patch³¹. Oooch! Well, as my mother used to say:

‘Yesterday has gone away;
Make the most of just today.’”

“Here I am up in the Old Pasture and the question is, ‘What shall I do next?’”

Peter felt a queer little thrill as he peeped out from under the friendly bramble bush. Very strange and wonderful it seemed. Of course he couldn't see very far, because the Old Pasture was all overgrown with bushes and briars, and they made the very blackest of black shadows in the moonlight. Peter wondered what dangers might be awaiting him there, but somehow, he didn't feel much afraid. No, sir, he didn't feel much afraid. You see those briars looked good to Peter, for briars are always friendly to Peter and unfriendly to those who would do harm to him. So when he saw them he felt almost at home.

Peter drew a long breath. Then he cried, “Ouch!” You see he had forgotten for a minute how sore he was. He was eager to explore this new wonderland, for Sammy Jay had told him wonderful tales about it and he knew that it was here that old Granny Fox and Reddy Fox had found safety when Farmer Brown's boy had hunted for them so hard on the Green Meadows and in the Green Forest³². He felt sure that there must be the most splendid hiding places, and it seemed as if he certainly must start right out to see them, for you know Peter is very, very curious. But the first move he made brought another “Ouch!” from him and he made up a wry face.

“I guess the best thing for me to do is to stay right where I am,” said he, “for here I am safe under this friendly old bramble.”

So with a sigh Peter settled down to make himself as comfortable as he could, and once as far, far away on the Green Meadows he heard the voice of Old Man Coyote, Peter even smiled.

“I haven't anything to fear from him, anyway, for he'll never think of coming way up here,” said he.

(Mrs. Peter Rabbit, Chapter 5)

STORY 444. July 16, 1913

Peter Rabbit is Still Lonesome

Peter Rabbit had left the dear old briar patch on the Green Meadows and come up to the Old Pasture because he was lonesome. Ever since Old Man Coyote had come to live on the Green Meadows Peter had been afraid to go about as he always had done,

31 STORY 303, 1913.

32 STORY 197, 1912.

and because no one else lived in the old briar patch Peter had grown so lonely that he couldn't stand it. So one moonlight night he had stolen out and made the long journey to the Old Pasture. Up there he felt sure that he would have nothing to fear from Old Man Coyote or Granny and Reddy Fox. But on the way Peter had been careless and had forgotten to watch out for Hooty the Owl, and Hooty had almost caught him.

All the rest of that night Peter sat under a friendly old bramble bush on the edge of the Old Pasture and nursed the sore places made by the claws of Hooty the Owl. At last jolly, round, red Mr. Sun began to climb up in the blue, blue sky, just as he does every day. Peter looked up at him, and he felt sure that Mr. Sun winked at him. Somehow it made him feel better. The fact is, Peter was beginning to feel just a wee bit homesick. It is bad enough to be in a strange place alone, but to be sore and smart and ache, as Peter did, makes that lonesome feeling a whole lot harder to bear. It is dreadful not to have any one to speak to, but to look around and not see a single thing you have ever seen before, my, my, my, it certainly does give a funny sinking feeling way down inside.

Before that long night was over Peter felt as if his heart had gone way down to his very toes. Yes, sir, that's the way he felt. Every time he moved, he cried "Ouch!" He just knew that he was growing more stiff and sore every minute. Then he began to wonder what he should do for something to eat, for he was in a strange place, you remember. And that made him think of all his private little paths through the dear old briar patch, the little paths he had made all himself and which no one used but himself excepting Danny Meadow Mouse when he came for a visit³³.

"Perhaps I shall never, never see them again," moaned Peter, and two big tears filled his eyes and were just ready to drop.

It was just then, that he looked up and saw jolly, round, red Mr Sun wink. Peter tried to wink back, and that made the two tears fall. But there were no more tears to follow. You see that wink had made all the difference in the world. Peter's heart had jumped right back where it belonged. Mr Sun was one of his oldest friends and you know

When trouble comes, a friendly face
Makes bright the very darkest place.

And so, just as he made bright all the Old Pasture, Mr Sun also made bright the dark little corners in Peter's heart, just because he was an old friend. To be sure Peter was still lonesome, but it was a different kind of lonesomeness. He hadn't anybody to talk to, which is always a dreadful thing to Peter, but he had only to look up to catch a friendly wink, and somehow that not only made him feel better inside, but it seemed to make his aches and smarts better, too.

(Mrs. Peter Rabbit, Chapter 6)

33 STORY 305, 1913.

STORY 445. July 17, 1913

Peter Finds Tracks

Peter Rabbit had sat still just as long as he could. He was stiff and lame and sore from the wounds made by Hooty the Owl, but his curiosity wouldn't let him sit still a minute longer. He just had to explore the Old Pasture. So with many a wry face and many an "Ouch" he limped out from the shelter of the friendly old bramble bush and started out to see what the Old Pasture was like.

Now, Hooty the Owl had taught Peter wisdom. With his torn clothes and his aches and smarts he couldn't very well forget to be careful. First he made sure that there was no danger near, and this time, you may be sure, he took pains to look all around in the sky as well as on the ground. Then he limped out to the very patch of sweet clover where Hooty had so nearly caught him the night before.

"A good breakfast," said Peter, "will make a new Rabbit of me." You know Peter thinks a great deal of his stomach. So he began to eat as fast as he could, stopping every other mouthful to look and listen. "I know it's a bad habit to eat fast," said he, "but it's a whole lot worse to have an empty stomach." So he ate and ate and ate as fast as he could make his little jaws go, which is very fast, indeed.

When Peter's stomach was stuffed full, he gave a great sigh of relief and limped back to the friendly old bramble bush to rest. But he couldn't sit still long, for he just had to find out all about the Old Pasture. So pretty soon he started out to explore. Such a wonderful place as it seemed to Peter. There were clumps of bushes with little open places between, just the nicest kind of playgrounds. Then there were funny spreading, prickly juniper trees, the very safest kind of places to crawl out of harm's way and to hide. Everywhere were paths made by cows. Very wonderful they seemed to Peter, who had never seen any like them before. He liked to follow them, for they led to all kinds of queer places.

Sometimes he would come to places where tall trees made him think of the Green Forest, only there were never more than a few trees together. Once he found an old tumble-down stone wall all covered with vines and he shouted right out with delight.

"It's a regular castle!" cried Peter, and he knew that there he would be safe from everyone but Shadow the Weasel. But he never was wholly safe from Shadow the Weasel anywhere, so he didn't let that thought worry him. By and by he came to a wet place, called a swamp. The ground was soft and there were little pools of water. Great ferns grew there, just as they did along the bank of the Laughing Brook, only more of them. There were pretty birch trees and wild cherry trees. It was still and dark and, O, so peaceful! Peter liked that place and sat down under a big fern to rest. He didn't hear a sound excepting the beautiful silvery voice of Veery the Thrush. Listening to it Peter fell asleep, for he was very tired.

By and by Peter awoke. For a minute he couldn't think where he was. Then he remembered. But for a long time he sat perfectly still, thinking of his adventures and wondering if they would miss him down on the Green Meadows. Then all of a sudden

Peter saw something that made him sit up so suddenly that he cried “Ouch!” for he had forgotten all about how stiff and sore he was. What do you think Peter saw? They were tracks! Yes, sir, they were tracks, Rabbit tracks in the soft mud, and Peter knew that he hadn’t made them!

(Mrs. Peter Rabbit, Chapter 7)

STORY 446. July 18, 1913

The Strange Tracks in The Old Pasture

Peter Rabbit stared and stared at the tracks in the soft mud of the swamp in the old pasture. He would look first at the tracks, then at his own feet and finally back at the tracks again. He scratched his long left ear with his long left hind foot. Then he scratched his long right ear with his right hind foot, all the time staring his hardest at those strange tracks. They certainly were the tracks of a Rabbit, and it was equally certain that they were not his own.

“They are too big for mine, and they are too small for Jumper the Hare’s. Besides Jumper is in the Green Forest and not way off up here,” said Peter to himself. “I wonder—well I wonder if he will try to drive me away?”

You see Peter knew that if he had found a strange Rabbit in his dear old briar patch he certainly would have tried his best to drive him out, for he felt that the old briar patch belonged to him. Now he wondered if the maker of these tracks would feel the same way about the Old Pasture. Peter looked troubled as he thought it over. Then his face cleared.

“Perhaps,” said he hopefully, “he is a newcomer here, too, and if he is I’ll have just as much right here as he has. Perhaps he simply has big feet and isn’t any bigger or stronger than I am, and if that’s the case I’d like to see him drive me out!”

Peter swelled himself out and tried to look as big as he could when he said this, but swelling himself out this way reminded him of how stiff and sore he was from the wounds given him by Hooty the Owl, and he made a wry face. You see he realized all of a sudden that he didn’t feel much like fighting.

“My,” said Peter, “I guess I better find out all about this other fellow before I have any trouble with him. The Old Pasture looks big enough for a lot of Rabbits, and perhaps if I don’t bother him, he won’t bother me. I wonder what he looks like. I believe I’ll follow these tracks and see what I can find.”

So Peter began to follow the tracks of the strange Rabbit and he was so interested that he almost forgot to limp. They led him this way and they led him that way through the swamp and then out of it. At the foot of a certain birch tree Peter stopped.

“Ha!” said he, “now I shall know just how big this fellow is.”

How was he to know? Why, you see, that tree was a kind of Rabbit measuring stick. Yes, sir, that is just what it was. You see Rabbits like to keep a record of how they

grow, just as some little boys and girls do, but as they have no doors or walls to stand against, they use trees. And this was the measuring tree of the Rabbit whose tracks Peter had been following. Peter stopped at the foot of it and sat down to think it over. He knew what that tree meant perfectly well. He had one or two measuring trees of his own on the edge of the Green Forest. He knew, too, that it was more than a mere measuring tree. It was a kind of “no trespassing” sign. It meant that some other Rabbit had lived here for some time and felt that he owned that part of the Old Pasture. Peter’s nose told him that, for the tree smelled very, very strong of a Rabbit—of the Rabbit with the big feet. This was because whoever used it for a measuring tree used to rub himself against it as far up as he could reach.

Peter hopped up close to it. Then he sat up very straight and stretched himself as tall as he could, but he wisely took care not to rub against the tree. You see he didn’t want to leave his own mark there. So he stretched and stretched, but stretch as he would he couldn’t make his wobbly little nose reach the mark made by the other Rabbit.

“My sakes, he is a big fellow!” exclaimed Peter. “I guess I don’t want to meet him until I feel better and stronger than I do now.”

(Mrs. Peter Rabbit, Chapter 8)

STORY 447. July 19, 1913

An Unpleasant Surprise

Legs are very useful when you want to run away;
Long, sharp teeth are splendid if to fight you want to stay;
But a greater blessing, whether one may stay or quits,
Is a well oiled, perfect balanced, sharpened set of wits.

So said Peter Rabbit as he sat in a snug hiding place in the Old Pasture and thought over what he had found out about the strange Rabbit whose tracks he had followed. They had led him to a rubbing or measuring tree where the strange Rabbit had placed his mark, and that mark was so high up on the tree that Peter knew that the strange Rabbit must be a great deal bigger than himself.

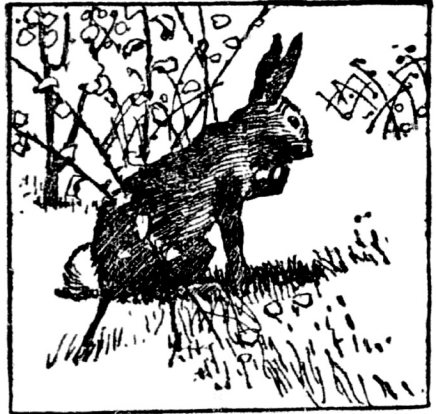
“If he’s bigger, of course, he is stronger,” thought Peter, “and if is both bigger and stronger, of course, it won’t be the least bit of use for me to fight him. Then, anyway, I’m too stiff and sore to fight. Of course he has no business to think he owns the Old Pasture, because he doesn’t. I have just as much right here as he has. Yes, sir, I have just as much right in this Old Pasture as he has, and if he thinks he can drive me out he is going to find that he never was more mistaken in his life! I’ll show him! Yes, sir-e-e, I’ll show him! I guess my wits are as sharp as his, and I wouldn’t wonder if they are a little bit sharper.

Foolish Peter Rabbit! There he was boasting and bragging to himself of what he would do to someone whom he hadn’t even seen, all because he had found a sign that told him the Old Pasture, in which he had made up his mind to make his new home, was already the home of someone else. Peter was like a lot of other people. He wasn’t

Illustrations. July 14 to July 19, 1913.



442. The Shadow With Sharp Claws



443. The Old Pasture



444. Peter Rabbit is Still Lonesome



445. Peter Finds Tracks



446. The Strange Tracks In The Old Pasture



447. An Unpleasant Surprise

fair. No, sir, he wasn't fair. He let his own desires destroy his sense of fair play. It was all right for him to put up signs in the dear old briar patch and the Green Forest, warning other Rabbits that they must keep away, but it was all wrong for another Rabbit to do the same thing in the Old Pasture. O, my, yes! That was quite a different matter! The very thought of it made Peter very, very angry. When he thought of this other Rabbit it was always as the stranger. That shows just how unfair Peter was, because, you see, Peter himself was really the stranger. It was his first visit to the Old Pasture, while it was very plain that the other had lived there for some time.

But Peter couldn't or wouldn't see that. You see he had counted so much on having the Old Pasture to himself and doing as he pleased that he was too upset and disappointed to be fair. If the other Rabbit had been smaller than he—well, that might have made a difference. The truth is, Peter was just a wee bit afraid. And perhaps it was that wee bit of fear that made him unfair and unjust. Anyway, the longer he sat and thought about it the angrier he grew, and the more he bragged and boasted to himself about what he would do.

"I'll just keep out of sight until my wounds have healed, and then we'll see who owns the Old Pasture!" thought Peter.

No sooner had this thought popped into his head than he received a surprise—such an unpleasant surprise! It was three heavy thumps right behind him. Peter knew what it meant. Of course he knew. It meant that he must run or fight. It meant that he had been so busy thinking about how smart he was going to be that he had forgotten to cover his own tracks, and so the maker of the big tracks he had followed had found him out.

Thump! thump! thump! There it was again. Peter knew by the sound that it was of no use to stay and fight, especially when he was so sore and stiff. There was nothing to do but run away. He just had to. And that is just what he did do, while his eyes filled with tears of rage and bitterness.

(Mrs. Peter Rabbit, Chapter 9)

STORY 448. July 21, 1913.

Peter Rabbit Almost Decides to Return Home

In all his life Peter Rabbit had never been so disappointed. Here he was in the Old Pasture, about which he had dreamed and thought so long, and in reaching which he had such a narrow escape from Hooty the Owl, and yet he was unhappy. The fact is, Peter was more unhappy than he could remember ever to have been before. Not only was he unhappy, but he was in great fear. Yes, sir, Peter was in great fear. The worst of it was he was in fear of an enemy who could go where ever he could go himself.

You see, it was this way: Peter had expected to find some enemies in the Old Pasture. He had felt quite sure that fierce old Mr. Goshawk was to be watched for, and perhaps Mr. Redtail and one or two others of the Hawk family. He knew that Granny and Reddy Fox had lived there once upon a time and might come back if things got too unpleasant for them on the Green Meadows, now that Old Man Coyote had made

his home there. But Peter didn't worry about any of these dangers. He was used to them, was Peter. He had been dodging them ever since he could remember. A friendly bramble bush, a little patch of briars or an old stone wall near was all that Peter needed to feel perfectly safe from these. But now he was in danger wherever he went, for he had an enemy who could go wherever he could, and it seemed to Peter that this enemy was following him all the time. Who was it? Why, it was a great big old rabbit with a very short temper, who, because he had lived there for a long time, felt that he owned the Old Pasture and that Peter had no right there.

Now in spite of all his trouble Peter had seen enough of the Old Pasture to think it a very wonderful place, a very wonderful place indeed. He had seen just enough to want to see more. You know how very curious Peter is. It seemed to him that he just couldn't go back to the dear old briar patch on the Green Meadows until he had seen everything to be seen in the Old Pasture. So he couldn't make up his mind to go back home, but stayed and stayed, hoping each day that the old gray rabbit would get tired of hunting for him, and would let him alone.

But the old gray rabbit didn't do anything of the kind. He seemed to take the greatest delight in waiting until Peter thought that he had found a corner of the Old Pasture where he would be safe, and then in stealing there when Peter was trying to take a nap, and driving him out. Twice Peter had tried to fight, but the old gray rabbit was too big for him. He knocked all the wind out of poor Peter with a kick from his big hind legs, and then with his sharp teeth he tore Peter's coat.

Poor Peter! His coat had already been badly torn by the cruel claws of Hooty the Owl, and Old Mother Nature hadn't had time to mend it when he fought with the old gray rabbit. After the second time Peter didn't try to fight again. He just tried to keep out of the way. And he did, too. But in doing it he lost so much sleep and he had so little time to eat that he grew thin and thin and thinner, until with his torn clothes, he looked like a scarecrow.

And still he hated to give in
When there was still so much to see.
"Persistence, I was taught, will win,
And so I will persist," said he.

And he did persist day after day, until at last he felt that he really must give it up. He had stretched out wearily on a tiny sunning bank in the farthest corner of the Old Pasture, and had just about made up his mind that he would get back that very night to the dear old briar patch on the Green Meadows, when a tiny rustle behind him made him jump to his feet with his heart in his mouth. But instead of the angry face of the old gray rabbit he saw—what do you think? Why, two of the softest, gentlest eyes peeping at him from behind a big fern.

(Mrs. Peter Rabbit, Chapter 10)

Peter Rabbit has a Sudden Change of Heart

Peter Rabbit stared at two soft, gentle eyes peeping at him from behind the big fern just back of the sunning bank in the far corner of the Old Pasture. He had so fully expected to see the angry face of the big gray old rabbit who had made life so miserable for him that for a minute he couldn't believe that he really saw what he did see. And so he just stared and stared. It was very rude. Of course it was. It was very rude indeed. It is always rude to stare at any one. So it was no wonder that after a minute the two soft, gentle eyes disappeared behind one of the great green leaves of the fern. Peter gave a great sigh. Then he remembered how rude he had been to stare so.

"I—I beg your pardon," said Peter in his politest, manner, which is very polite indeed, for Peter can be very polite when he wants to be. "I beg your pardon. I didn't mean to frighten you. Please forgive me."

Peter waited for a reply with the greatest eagerness. You know it was because he had been so lonesome that he had left his home in the dear old briar patch, on the Green Meadows. And since he had been in the Old Pasture he had been almost as lonesome, for he had had no one to talk to. So now he waited eagerly for a reply. You see, he felt sure that the owner of such soft, gentle eyes must have a soft, gentle voice and a soft, gentle heart, and there was nothing in the world that Peter needed just then so much as sympathy. But though he waited and waited there wasn't a sound from the big fern.

"Perhaps you don't know who I am. I'm Peter Rabbit and I've come way up here from the Green Meadows and I'd like very much to be your friend," continued Peter after a while. Still there was no sound. Peter peeped from the corner of one eye at the place where he had seen the two soft, gentle eyes, but there was nothing to be seen but the gently waving leaf of the big fern. Peter didn't know just what to do. He wanted to hop over to the big fern and peep behind it, but he didn't dare to. He was afraid that whoever was hiding there would run away.

"I'm very lonesome; won't you speak to me?" said Peter in his gentlest voice, and he sighed a deep doleful sort of sigh. Still there was no reply. Peter had just about made up his mind that he would go over to the big fern when he saw those two soft, gentle eyes peeping from under a different fern leaf. It seemed to Peter that never in his life had he seen such beautiful eyes. They looked so shy and bashful that Peter held his breath for fear that he would frighten them away.

After a time, the eyes disappeared. Then Peter saw a little movement among the ferns and he knew that whoever it was was stealing away. He wanted to follow, but something down inside him warned him that it was best to sit still. So Peter sat just where he was and kept perfectly still for the longest time.

But the eyes didn't appear again and at last he felt sure that whoever they belonged to had really gone away. Then he sighed another great sigh, for suddenly he felt more lonesome than ever. He hopped over to the big fern and looked behind it. There in the soft earth was a footprint, the footprint of a rabbit, and it was smaller than his own. It

seemed to Peter that it was the most wonderful little footprint he ever had seen.

“I believe,” said Peter, right out loud, “that’ll I’ll change my mind. I won’t go back to the dear old briar patch just yet after all.”

(Mrs. Peter Rabbit, Chapter 11)

STORY 450. July 23, 1913

Peter Rabbit Learns from his Friend, Tommy Tit

Hello, Peter Rabbit! What are you doing way up here and what are you looking so mournful about?”

Peter gave a great start of pleased surprise. That was the first friendly voice he had heard for days and days.

“Hello yourself, Tommy Tit!” shouted Peter, joyously. “My, my, my, but I am glad to see you! But what are you doing up here in the Old Pasture yourself?”

Tommy Tit, the Chickadee, hung head down from the tip of a slender branch of a maple tree and winked a saucy bright eye at Peter. “I’ve got a secret up here,” he said.

Now, there is nothing in the world Peter Rabbit loves more than a secret. But he cannot keep one to save him. No, sir; Peter Rabbit can no more keep a secret than he can fly. He means to. His intentions are the very best in the world, but—

Alas! alack! poor Peter’s tongue
Is very, very loosely hung.

And so, because he must talk, he will talk every chance he gets, he cannot keep a secret. People who talk too much never can.

“What is your secret?” asked Peter, eagerly.

Tommy Tit looked down at Peter and his sharp little eyes twinkled. “It’s a nest with six of the dearest little babies in the world in it,” he replied.

“Oh, how lovely!” cried Peter. “Where is it, Tommy Tit?”

“In a hollow birch stub,” replied Tommy, his eyes twinkling more than ever.

“But where is the hollow birch stub?” persisted Peter.

Tommy laughed. “That’s my real secret,” said he, “and if I should tell you, it wouldn’t be a secret at all. Now tell me what you are doing up here in the Old Pasture, Peter Rabbit.”

Peter saw that it was of no use to tease Tommy Tit for his secret, so instead he poured out all his own troubles. He told how lonesome he had been in the dear old briar patch on the Green Meadows because he didn’t dare to go about for fear of Old Man Coyote, and how at last he had decided to visit the Old Pasture. He told how Hooty the Owl had nearly caught him on his way, and then how ever since his arrival he had been hunted by the big gray old Rabbit so that he could neither eat nor sleep and had become

so miserable that at last he had made up his mind to go back to the dear old briar patch.

“Ho!” interrupted Tommy Tit, “I know him. He’s old Jed Thumper, the oldest, biggest, crossest Rabbit anywhere around. He’s lived in the Old Pasture so long that he thinks he owns it. It’s a wonder that he hasn’t killed you.”

“I guess perhaps he would have, only I can run faster than he can,” replied Peter, looking a little shame-faced because he had to own up that he ran away instead of fighting.

Tommy Tit laughed. “That’s the very wisest thing you could have done,” said he. “But why don’t you go back to the dear old briar patch in the Green Meadows?”

Peter hesitated and looked a wee bit foolish. Finally he told Tommy Tit all about the two soft, gentle eyes he had seen peeping at him from behind a big fern, and how he wanted to know who the eyes belonged to.

“If that’s all you want to know, I can tell you,” said Tommy Tit, jumping out into the air to catch a foolish little bug who tried to fly past

“Those eyes belong to little Miss Fuzzytail, and she’s the favorite daughter of old Jed Thumper. You take my advice, Peter Rabbit, and trot along home to the old briar patch before you get into any more trouble. There’s my wife calling. Yes, my dear, I’m coming! Chicka-dee-dee-dee!”

And with a wink and a nod to Peter Rabbit, off flew Tommy Tit.

(*Mrs. Peter Rabbit*, Chapter 12, “Peter Learns Something from Tommy Tit”)

STORY 451. July 24, 1913

Little Miss Fuzzytail Peeps at Peter Rabbit

“Little Miss Fuzzytail!” Peter Rabbit said it over and over again as he sat on the sunning bank in the far corner of the Old Pasture where Tommy Tit the Chickadee had left him.

“It’s a pretty name,” said Peter. “Yes, sir; it’s a pretty name. It’s the prettiest name I’ve ever heard. I wonder if she is just as pretty. I—I think she must be. Yes, I am quite sure she must be.” Peter was thinking of the soft, gentle eyes he had seen peeping at him from behind the big fern, and of the dainty little footprint he had found there afterward. So he sat on the sunning bank dreaming pleasant dreams and wondering if he could find little Miss Fuzzytail if he should go look for her.

Now all the time, although Peter didn’t know it, little Miss Fuzzytail was very close by. She was right back in her old hiding place behind the big fern, shyly peeping out at him from under a great leaf where she was sure he wouldn’t see her. She saw the long tears in Peter’s coat, made by the cruel claws of Hooty the Owl, and she saw the places where her father, old Jed Thumper, had pulled the hair out with his teeth. She saw how thin and miserable Peter looked, and tears of pity filled the soft, gentle eyes of little Miss Fuzzytail, for, you see, she had a very tender heart.

“He’s got a very nice face,” thought Miss Fuzzytail, “and he certainly was very polite when he spoke to me yesterday. Yes, indeed, he certainly was very polite, and I do love good manners. And Peter is such a nice sounding name! It sounds so honest and good and true. Poor fellow! Poor Peter Rabbit!” Here little Miss Fuzzy-tail wiped her eyes. “He looks so miserable I do wish I could do something for him. I—I—O, dear, I do believe he is coming right over here! I guess I better be going. How he limps!”

Once more the tears filled her soft, gentle eyes as she stole away, making not the least little sound. When she was sure that she was far enough away to hurry without attracting Peter’s attentions he began to run.

“I saw him talking to my old friend Tommy Tit the Chickadee, and I just know that Tommy will tell me all about him,” she thought as she scampered along certain private little paths of her own toward a certain old birch stub on the edge of a certain swamp.

Just as she expected, she found Tommy Tit and his anxious little wife, Phoebe, very busy hunting for food for six little babies snugly hidden in a hollow near the top of the old birch stub. Tommy was too busy to talk then, so little Miss Fuzzytail sat down under a friendly bramble bush to rest and wait, and while she waited, she carefully washed her face and brushed her coat until it fairly shone. You see, not in all the Old Pasture or the Green Forest was there so slim and trim and neat and dainty a Rabbit as little Miss Fuzzytail, and she was very particular about her appearance.

By and by Tommy Tit stopped to rest. He looked down at Miss Fuzzytail and winked a saucy black eye. Miss Fuzzytail winked back. Then both laughed, for they were very good friends, indeed.

“Tell me, Tommy Tit, all about Peter Rabbit,” commanded little Miss Fuzzytail. And Tommy did.

(Mrs. Peter Rabbit, Chapter 13, “Little Miss Fuzzytail”)

STORY 452. July 25, 1913

Some One Fools Old Jed Thumper, the Gray Rabbit

Old Jed Thumper sat in his bull-brier castle in the middle of the Old Pasture scowling fiercely and muttering to himself. He was very angry, was old Jed Thumper. He was so an that presently he stopped muttering and began to chew rapidly on nothing at all but his temper, which is a way angry Rabbits have.

The more he chewed his temper the angrier he grew. He was big and stout and strong and gray. He had lived so long in the Old Pasture that he felt that it belonged to him, and that no other Rabbit had any right there unless he said so. Yet here was a strange Rabbit who had had the impudence to come up from the Green Meadows and refused to be driven away, Such impudence! He couldn’t remember when such a thing had happened before.

Of course, it was Peter Rabbit, of whom old Jed Thumper was thinking. It was

two days since he had caught a glimpse of Peter, but he knew that Peter was still in the Old Pasture, for he had found fresh tracks each day. That very morning, he had visited his favorite feeding ground only to find Peter's tracks there. It had made him so angry that he had lost his appetite and he had gone straight back to bull-briar castle to think it over. At last old Jed Thumper stopped chewing on nothing. He scowled more fiercely than ever and stamped the ground impatiently.

"I'll hunt that fellow till I kill him or drive him so far from the Old Pasture that he'll never think of coming back. I certainly will," he said out loud, and started forth to hunt for Peter Rabbit.

Now, it would have been better for the plans of Old Jed Thumper if he had kept them to himself instead of speaking aloud. Two dainty little ears heard what he said, and two soft, gentle eyes watched him leave the bull-briar castle. He started straight for the far corner of the Old Pasture where, although he didn't know it, Peter Rabbit had found a warm little sunning bank. But he hadn't gone far when, from way off in the opposite direction, he heard a sound that made him stop short and prick up his long ears to listen. There it was again—thump, thump! He was just going to thump back an angry reply when he thought better of it.

"If I do that," thought he, "I'll only warn him, and he'll run away, just as he has before."

So instead, he turned and hurried in the direction from which the thumps had come, taking the greatest care to make no noise. Every few jumps he would stop to listen. Twice more he heard those thumps, and each time new rage filled his heart, and for a minute or two he chewed his temper.

"He's down at my blueberry patch," he muttered, and hurried on.

At last he reached the blueberry patch. Very softly he crept to a place where he could see and not be seen. No one was there. No, sir, no one was there! He waited and watched, but there wasn't a hair of Peter Rabbit to be seen. He was just getting ready to go look for Peter's tracks when he heard that thump, thump again. This time it came from his favorite clover patch, where he never allowed even his favorite daughter, little Miss Fuzzytail, to go. Anger nearly choked him as he hurried in that direction. But when he got there, just as before, no one was to be seen.

So all the morning long old Jed Thumper hurried from one place to another and never once caught sight of Peter Rabbit. Can you guess why? Well, the reason was that all the time Peter was stretched out on his warm sunning-bank getting the rest he so much needed. It was someone else who was fooling old Jed Thumper.

(Mrs. Peter Rabbit, Chapter 14, "Some One Fools old Jed Thumper")

STORY 453. July 26, 1913

A Pleasant Surprise for Peter Rabbit

All the morning while some one was fooling Old Jed Thumper, the cross old

Illustrations. July 21 to July 26, 1913.



448. Peter Rabbit Almost Decides to Return Home



449. Peter Rabbit has a Sudden Change of Heart



450. Peter Rabbit Learns from his friend, Tommy Tit



451. Little Miss Fuzzytail Peeps at Peter Rabbit



452. Some One Fools Old Jed Thumper, the Gray Rabbit



453. A Pleasant Surprise for Peter Rabbit

rabbit who thought he owned the Old Pasture, Peter Rabbit lay stretched on the warm little sunning-bank which he had found, dreaming of soft, gentle eyes and beautiful little footprints. It was a dangerous place, to go to sleep, because at any time fierce Mr. Goshawk might have come that way, and if he had and had found Peter Rabbit asleep, why that would have seen the end of Peter and all the stories about him.

But Peter did go to sleep. You see, the sunning-bank was so warm and comfortable, and he was so tired and had had so little sleep for such a long time, that in spite of all he could do he nodded and nodded and finally slipped off into dreamland.

Peter slept a long time, for no one came to disturb him. It was past noon when he opened his eyes and blinked up at jolly, round, red Mr. Sun. For a minute he couldn't remember where he was. When he did, he sprang to his feet, and hastily looked this way and that way.

"My gracious!" exclaimed Peter. "My gracious, what a careless fellow I am! It's a wonder that Old Jed Thumper didn't find me asleep. My, but I'm hungry! Seems as if I hadn't had a good, square meal for a year."

Peter stopped suddenly and began to wrinkle his nose. "Umm," said he, "if I didn't know better, I should say that there was a patch of sweet clover close by. Umm, my, my! Am I really awake or am I still dreaming? I certainly do smell sweet clover!"

Slowly Peter turned his head in the direction from which the delicious smell seemed to come. Then he whirled around and stared as hard as ever he could, his mouth gaping wide open in surprise. He blinked, rubbed his eyes, then blinked again. There could be no doubt about it, there on the edge of the sunning bank was a neat little pile of tender sweet clover. Yes, sir, there it was.

Peter walked all around it, looking for all the world as if he couldn't believe that it was real. Finally, he reached out and nibbled a leaf of it. It was real!

There was no doubt in Peter's mind then. Some one had put it there while Peter was asleep, and Peter knew that it was meant for him. Who could it have been?

Suddenly a thought popped into Peter's head. He stopped eating and hopped over to the big fern from behind which he had seen the two soft, gentle eyes peeping at him the day before. There in the soft earth was a fresh footprint, and it looked very, very much like the footprint of dainty little Miss Fuzzytail.

Peter's heart gave a happy little jump. He felt sure now who had put the clover there. He looked wistfully about among the ferns, but she was nowhere to be seen. Finally, he hopped back to the pile of clover and ate it, every bit, and it seemed to him that it was the sweetest, tenderest clover he had ever tasted in all his life.

(Mrs. Peter Rabbit, Chapter 15, "A Pleasant Surprise for Peter")

STORY 454. July 28, 1913

Peter Rabbit Hunts Up His Looking-Glass

For the first time in his life Peter Rabbit had begun to think about his clothes. Always he had been such a happy-go-lucky fellow that it never had entered his head to care how he looked. He laughed at Sammy Jay for thinking so much of that beautiful blue and white coat he wears, and he poked fun at Reddy Fox for bragging so much about his handsome suit. As for himself Peter didn't care how he looked. If his coat was whole or in rags and tags, it was all the same to Peter.

But now Peter, sitting on the edge of his sunning bank in the far corner of the Old Pasture, suddenly realized that he wanted to be good looking. Yes, sir, he wanted to be good looking. He wished that he was bigger. He wished that he was the biggest and strongest rabbit in the world. He wished that he had a handsome coat. And it was all because of the soft, gentle eyes of little Miss Fuzzytail. He had seen them peeping out at him once, and he felt pretty sure that they had peeped out at him often. He felt sure that it was little Miss Fuzzytail herself who had left the pile of sweet clover close by his sunning bank while he was asleep.

The fact is, Peter Rabbit was falling in love. Yes, sir, Peter Rabbit was falling in love. All he had seen of little Miss Fuzzytail was her soft, gentle eyes, for she was very shy and had kept out of sight, but ever since he had first seen them, he had thought and dreamed of nothing else, until it seemed as if there was nothing in the world he wanted so much as to meet her. Perhaps he would have wanted this still more if he had known that it was because she had fooled her father, old Jed Thumper, the big gray old rabbit, who had made life so miserable for Peter, leading him to other parts of the Old Pasture, that Peter had been able to have the long nap on the sunning bank he so needed.

"I've just got to meet her. I've just got to!" said Peter to himself, and right then he began to wish that he was big and fine looking.

"My, I must be a sight!" he thought. I wonder how I do look anyway. I must hunt up a looking glass and find out."

Now when Peter Rabbit thinks of doing a thing, he wastes very little time. It was that way now. He started at once for the bit of swamp where he had first seen the tracks of old Jed Thumper. He still limped from the wounds made by Hooty the Owl the night he came to the Old Pasture, but in spite of this he could travel pretty fast, and it didn't take him long to reach the swamp.

There, just as he expected, he found a looking glass. What was it like? Why, it was just a tiny pool of water. Yes, sir, it was a quiet pool of water that reflected the ferns growing around it, and the branches of the trees hanging over it and—why, Peter Rabbit himself sitting on the edge of it. That was Peter's looking glass.

For a long time, he stared into it. At last, he gave a great sigh. "My, but I am a sight!" he exclaimed.

He was. His coat was ragged and torn from the claws of Hooty the Owl and the

teeth of old Jed Thumper. The white patch on the seat of his trousers was stained and dirty from sitting down in the mud. There were burrs tangled in his waistcoat. He was thin, and altogether a miserable looking Rabbit.

“It must be that Miss Fuzzytail just pities me. She certainly can’t admire me,” muttered Peter as he pulled out the burrs.

For the next hour Peter was very busy. He washed and he brushed and he combed. When at last he had done all that he could he took another look in his looking-glass, and what he saw was a very different looking Rabbit.

Though I am homely, lank and lean
I can at least be neat and clean,

said he, as he started back for the sunning bank.

(*Mrs. Peter Rabbit*, Chapter 16, “Peter Rabbit’s Looking-Glass”)

STORY 455. July 29, 1913

Peter Rabbit at Last Meets Miss Fuzzytail

Peter Rabbit was feeling better and certainly he was looking better. You see, just as soon as Old Mother Nature saw that Peter was trying to look as well as he could and was keeping himself as neat and tidy as he knew how, she was ready to help, as she always is. So she did her best with the rents in his coat, made by the claws of Hooty the Owl and the teeth of old Jed Thumper, the big gray Rabbit who thought he owned the Old Pasture, and so it wasn’t long before Peter’s coat looked nearly as good as new. Then, too, Peter was getting enough to eat these days. It was days and days since he had seen old Jed Thumper, and this had given him time to eat and sleep.

Peter wondered what had become of old Jed Thumper. “Perhaps something has happened to him,” thought Peter. “I—I almost hope something has.” Then, being ashamed of such a wish, he added, “Something not very dreadful, but which will keep him from hunting me for a while and trying to drive me out of the Old Pasture.”

Now, all this time Peter had been trying to find little Miss Fuzzytail. He was already in love with her although all he had seen of her were her two soft, gentle eyes shyly peeping at him from behind a big fern. He had wandered here and wandered there looking for her, but although he found her footprints very often she always managed to keep out of his sight. You see she knew the Old Pasture so much better than he did, and all the little paths in it, that she had very little trouble in keeping out of his way. Then, too, she was very busy. You see it was she who was keeping her cross old father, old Jed Thumper, away from Peter because she was so sorry for him. But Peter didn’t know that. If he had I am afraid that he would have been more in love than ever.

The harder she was to find the more Peter wanted to find her. He spent a great deal of time each day brushing his coat and making himself look as fine as he could, and while he was doing it, he kept wishing over and over again that something would

happen so that he could show little Miss Fuzzytail what a smart, brave fellow he really was.

But one day followed another and Peter seemed no nearer to meeting little Miss Fuzzytail than ever. He was thinking of this and was really growing very downhearted one morning as he sat under a friendly bramble bush, when suddenly there was a sharp little scream of fright from behind a little juniper tree.

Somehow Peter knew whose voice that was, although he never had heard it before. He sprang around the little juniper tree and what he saw filled Peter with such rage that he didn't stop once to think of himself. There was little Miss Fuzzytail in the clutches of Black Pussy, one of Farmer Brown's cats, who often stole away from home to hunt in the Old Pasture. Like a flash Peter sprang over Black Pussy, and as he did so he kicked with all his might. The cat hadn't seen him coming and the kick knocked her right into the prickly juniper-tree. Of course she lost her grip on little Miss Fuzzytail, who hadn't been hurt so much as frightened.

By the time the cat could get out of the Juniper-tree, Peter and little Miss Fuzzytail were sitting side by side safe in the middle of a bull-briar patch.

"O, how brave you are!" sobbed Miss Fuzzytail.

And this is the way Peter Rabbit at last got his heart's desire.

(*Mrs. Peter Rabbit*, Chapter 17, "Peter Meets Miss Fuzzytail")

STORY 456. July 30, 1913

Tommy Tit, the Chickadee, Proves a Friend Indeed

After Peter Rabbit had saved little Miss Fuzzytail from Black Pussy, the cat who belonged way down to Farmer Brown's house and had no business hunting in the Old Pasture, he went with her as near to her home as she would let him. She said, that it wasn't necessary that he should go a single step, but Peter insisted that she needed him to see that no more harm came to her. Miss Fuzzytail laughed at that, for she felt quite able to take care of herself. It had been just stupid carelessness on her part that had given Black Pussy the chance to catch her, she said, and she was very sure that she never would be so careless again. What she didn't tell Peter was that she had been so busy peeping at him and admiring him that she had quite forgotten to watch out for danger for herself.

Finally, she said that he could go part way with her, but when they were almost within sight of the bull-briar castle of her father, old Jed Thumper, the big gray Rabbit who thought he owned the Old Pasture, she made Peter turn back. You see, she was afraid of what old Jed Thumper might do to Peter, and—well, the truth is she was afraid of what he might do to her if he should find out that she had made friends with Peter.

So Peter was forced to go back, but he took with him a half promise that she would meet him the next night up near his sunning-bank in the far corner of the Old Pasture.

After that there were many pleasant days for Peter Rabbit. Sometimes little Miss Fuzzytail would meet him and sometimes she would shyly hide from him, but somehow, somewhere, he managed to see her every day, and so all the time in Peter's heart was a little song:

The sky is blue, the leaves are green,
The golden sunbeams peep between;
My heart is joyful as can be,
And all the world looks bright to me.

And then one day old Jed Thumper found out all about how his daughter, little Miss Fuzzytail, and Peter Rabbit had become such good friends. Old Thumper went into a terrible rage. He chewed and chewed with nothing in his mouth, that is, nothing but his temper, the way an angry Rabbit will. He vowed and declared that he would drive Peter Rabbit from the Old Pasture if he never ate another mouthful.

My, my, my, those were bad days for Peter Rabbit! Yes, sir, those certainly were bad days! Old Jed Thumper had found out how little Miss Fuzzytail had been fooling him by making him think that Peter was in parts of the Old Pasture quite the opposite direction from where he really was. Worse, still, he found Peter's favorite sunning bank in the far corner of the Old Pasture, and would hide near it and try to catch Peter every time Peter tried to get a few minutes' rest there. He did something worse than that.

One day he saw fierce Mr. Goshawk hunting. He let Mr. Goshawk almost catch him and then ducked under a bramble bush. Then he showed himself again and once more escaped in the same way. So he led fierce Mr. Goshawk to a point where Mr. Goshawk could look down and see Peter Rabbit stretched out on his sunning bank trying to get a little rest. Right away Mr. Goshawk forgot all about old Jed Thumper and sailed up in the sky from where he could swoop down on Peter, while old Jed Thumper, chuckling to himself wickedly, hid where he could watch what would happen.

That certainly would have been the last of Peter Rabbit if it hadn't been for Tommy Tit the Chickadee. Tommy saw Mr. Goshawk and just in time warned Peter, and so Mr. Goshawk got only his claws full of soft earth for his pains, while old Jed Thumper once more chewed on nothing in rage and disappointment. Dear me, dear me, those certainly were dreadful days for Peter Rabbit and little Miss Fuzzytail. You see all the time little Miss Fuzzytail was terribly worried for fear Peter would be caught.

(Mrs. Peter Rabbit, Chapter 18, "Tommy Tit Proves a Friend Indeed")

STORY 457. July 31, 1913

Old Man Coyote Pays Debt Owed to Peter Rabbit

Matters went from bad to worse with Peter Rabbit and Little Miss Fuzzytail. Peter would have made up his mind to go back to his old home in the dear old briar patch on the Green Meadows, but he felt that he just couldn't leave little Miss Fuzzytail, and little Miss Fuzzytail couldn't make up her mind to go with Peter because she felt that

she just couldn't leave the Old Pasture, which had always been her home. So Peter spent his days and nights always ready to jump and run from old Jed Thumper, the gray old rabbit who thought he owned the Old Pasture and who had declared that he would drive Peter out.

Now Peter had an old friend in the Old Pasture, Tommy Tit, the Chickadee. One day Tommy took it into his head to fly down to the Green Meadows. There he found everybody wondering what had become of Peter Rabbit, for you know Peter had stolen away from the dear old briar patch in the night and had told no one where he was going.

Now one of the first to ask Tommy Tit if he had seen Peter Rabbit was Old Man Coyote. Tommy told him where Peter was and of the dreadful time Peter was having. Old Man Coyote asked a lot of questions about the Old Pasture and thanked Tommy very politely as Tommy flew over to the Smiling Pool to call on Grandfather Frog and Jerry Muskrat.

That night after jolly, round, red Mr. Sun had gone to bed behind the Purple Hills, and the black shadows had crept over the Green Meadows, Old Man Coyote started for the Old Pasture. Now, he had never been there before, but he had asked so many questions of Tommy Tit, and he is so smart anyway, that it didn't take him long to find his way all through the Old Pasture and to find the bull-briar castle of old Jed Thumper, the gray old rabbit, who was making life so miserable for Peter Rabbit. He wasn't at home, but Old Man Coyote's wonderful nose soon found his tracks, and he followed them swiftly, without making a sound. Pretty soon he came to a bramble bush, and under it he could see old Jed Thumper.

For just a minute he chuckled, a noiseless chuckle, to himself. Then he opened his mouth and out came that terrible sound which had so frightened all the little people on the Green Meadows when Old Man Coyote had first come there to live.

"Ha, ha, ha! Ho, ho, ho! Hee, hee, hee! Ha, ho, hee, ho!"

Old Jed Thumper never had heard anything like that before. It frightened him so that before he thought what he was doing he had jumped out from under the bramble bush. Of course this was just what Old Man Coyote wanted. In a flash he was after him, and then began such a race as the old pasture never had seen before. Round and round, this way and that way, along the cow paths raced Old Jed Thumper with Old Man Coyote at his heels until at last, out of breath, so tired that it seemed to him he couldn't run another step, frightened almost out of his senses, Old Jed Thumper reached his bull-briar castle and was safe.

Then Old Man Coyote laughed his terrible laugh once more and trotted over to the tumbled down stone wall in which his keen nose told him Peter Rabbit was hiding.

"One good turn deserves another, and I always pay my debts, Peter Rabbit," said he. "You did me a good turn some time ago down on the Green Meadows³⁴ and now we are even. I don't think that old gray Rabbit will dare to poke so much as his nose out of his bull-briar castle for a week. Now I am going back to the Green Meadows. Good

34 STORY 436, 1913.

night, Peter Rabbit, and don't forget that I always pay my debts."

"Good night, and thank you, Mr Coyote," said Peter and then when Old Man Coyote had gone, he added to himself in a shamefaced way: "I didn't believe him when he said that he guessed we would be friends."

(*Mrs. Peter Rabbit*, Chapter 19, "Old Man Coyote Pays a Debt")

STORY 458. August 1, 1913

Miss Fuzzytail Yields at Last to Peter Rabbit

Love is a beautiful, wonderful thing.
There's nothing quite like it on all the great earth.
'Tis love in the heart teaches birdies to sing.
And gives the wide world all its joy and its mirth.

Peter Rabbit was finding this out. Always he had been happy, for happiness had been born in him. But the happiness he had known before was nothing to the happiness that was his when he found that he loved little Miss Fuzzytail and that little Miss Fuzzytail loved him. Peter was sure that she did love him, although she wouldn't say so. But love doesn't need words to make itself felt, and Peter had seen it shining in the two soft, gentle eyes of little Miss Fuzzytail. So Peter was happy in spite of the trouble that old Jed Thumper, the big, gray Rabbit who was the father of little Miss Fuzzytail, had made for him in the Old Pasture.

He had tried very hard, very hard indeed, to get little Miss Fuzzytail to go back with him to the dear old briar patch on the Green Meadows, but in spite of all he could say she couldn't make up her mind to leave the Old Pasture, which, you know, had been her home since she was born. And Peter couldn't make up his mind to go back there and leave her because— why, because he loved her so much that he felt that he could never, never be happy without her. Then, when old Jed Thumper was hunting Peter so hard that he hardly had a chance to eat or sleep, had come Old Man Coyote the Wolf and given old Jed Thumper such a fright that for a week he didn't dare poke so much as his nose out of his bull-briar castle.

Now, although Old Man Coyote didn't know it, his terrible voice had frightened little Miss Fuzzytail almost as much as it had old Jed Thumper. You see she never had heard it before. She didn't even know what it was, and all that night she had crouched in her most secret hiding place shivering and shaking with fright. The next morning Peter had found her there. She hadn't slept a wink, and she was still too frightened to even go look for her breakfast.

"O, Peter Rabbit, did you hear that terrible noise last night?" she cried.

"What noise?" asked Peter just as if he didn't know anything about it.

"Why that terrible voice!" cried little Miss Fuzzytail, and shivered at the thought of it.

"What was it like?" asked Peter.

“O, I can’t tell you,” said little Miss Fuzzytail. “It wasn’t like anything I ever heard before. It was something like a voice of Hooty the Owl and the voice of Dippy the Loon and the voice of a little yelping dog all in one, and it was just terrible!”

“O,” replied Peter, “you must mean the voice of my friend Old Man Coyote. He came up here last night just to do me a good turn because I once did him a good turn.”

Then he told all about how Old Man Coyote had come to the Green Meadows to live, and how he was smarter than even old Granny Fox, but he didn’t tell her how he himself had once been frightened almost out of a year’s growth by that terrible voice, or that it was because he hadn’t really believed that Old Man Coyote was his friend that had led him to leave the old briar patch and come up to the Old Pasture.

“Is—is he fond of Rabbits?” asked little Miss Fuzzytail.

Peter was quite sure that he was.

“And do you think he’ll come up here hunting again?” she asked.

Peter didn’t know, but he suspected that he would.

“O, dear,” wailed little Miss Fuzzytail, “now I never, never will feel safe again!”

Then Peter had a happy thought. “I tell you what,” said he, “the safest place in the world for you and me is my dear old briar patch. Won’t you go there now?”

Little Miss Fuzzytail sighed and dropped a tear or two. Then she nestled up close to Peter. “Yes,” she whispered.

(*Mrs. Peter Rabbit*, Chapter 20, “Little Miss Fuzzytail Whispers ‘Yes’”)

STORY 459. August 2, 1913

Peter and Little Miss Fuzzytail Quit Old Pasture

As soon as little Miss Fuzzytail had agreed to go with him to make her home in the dear old briar patch down on the Green Meadows, Peter Rabbit fairly boiled over with impatience to start. He had had so much trouble in the Old Pasture that he was anxious to get away. Besides, he was afraid that if they waited too long little Miss Fuzzytail might change her mind, and if she should do that—well, Peter didn’t know what he would do.

But Peter, who always had been so happy-go-lucky, with no one to think about but himself, now felt for the first time re-spons-i-bility. That’s a big word, but it is a word that everybody has to learn the meaning of some time. Johnny Chuck learned it when he made a home for Polly Chuck in Farmer Brown’s orchard, and tried to keep it a secret, so that no harm would come to Polly³⁵. It means taking care of other people or other people’s things, and feeling that you must take even greater care than you would of yourself or your own things. So, while Peter himself would have been willing to take chances, and might even have made the journey down to the dear old briar patch in broad daylight, he felt that that wouldn’t do at all for little Miss Fuzzytail, that he must

35 STORY 356, 1913.

Illustrations. July 28 to August 2, 1913.



454. Peter Rabbit Hunts Up His Looking Glass



455. Peter Rabbit at Last Meets Miss Fuzzytail



456. Tommy Tit, the Chickadee, Proves a Friend Indeed



457. Old Man Coyote Pays Debt Owed to Peter Rabbit



458. Miss Fuzzytail Yields at Last to Peter Rabbit



459. Peter and Little Miss Fuzztail Quit Old Pasture

avoid every possible chance of danger for her.

So Peter waited for a dark night, not too dark, you know, but a night when there was no moon to make great patches of light, but only the kindly little stars looking down and twinkling in the friendly way they have. At last, there was just such a night. All the afternoon little Miss Fuzzytail went about in the Old Pasture saying good-by to her friends and visiting each one of her favorite little paths and hiding places, and I suspect that in each one she dropped a tear or two, for you see she felt sure that she never would see them again, although Peter had promised that he would bring her back to the Old Pasture for a visit whenever she wanted to come.

At last it was time to start. Peter led the way. Very big and brave and strong and important he felt, and very timid and frightened felt little Miss Fuzzytail, hopping after him close at his heels. You see she felt that she was going out into the great wide world, of which she knew nothing at all.

“O, Peter,” she whispered, “supposing we should meet Reddy Fox! I shouldn’t know where to run or hide.”

“We are not going to meet Reddy Fox,” replied Peter, “but if we should, all you have to do is to just keep your eyes on the white patch on the seat of my trousers and follow me. I have fooled Reddy so many times that I’m not afraid of him.”

Never in all his life had Peter been so watchful and careful. That was because he felt his re-spons-i-bility. Every few jumps he would stop to sit up and listen. Then little Miss Fuzzytail would nestle up close to him, and Peter’s heart would swell with happiness and he would feel, O, so proud and important. Once they heard the sharp bark of Reddy Fox, but it was a long way off and Peter smiled, for he knew that Reddy was hunting on the edge of the Green Forest.

Once a dim shadow swept across the meadow grass ahead of them. Peter dropped flat in the grass and kept perfectly still, and little Miss Fuzzytail did just as he did, as she had promised she would.

“Wha—what was it?” she whispered.

“I think it was Hooty the Owl,” Peter whispered back, “but he didn’t see us.”

After what seemed like a long, long time they heard Hooty’s fierce hunting call, but it came from way back of them on the edge of the Old Pasture. Peter hopped to his feet.

“Come on,” said he. “There’s nothing to fear from him now.”

So slowly and watchfully Peter led the way down across the Green Meadows, while the little stars looked down and twinkled in the most friendly way, and just as jolly round red Mr. Sun started to kick off his bedclothes behind the Purple Hills they reached the dear old briar patch.

“Here we are!” cried Peter.

“O, I’m so glad!” cried little Miss Fuzzytail, hopping along one of Peter’s private little paths.

(*Mrs. Peter Rabbit*, Chapter 21, “Peter and Little Miss Fuzzytail Leave the Old Pasture”)

STORY 460. August 4, 1913

Sammy Jay is Curious About New Mrs Peter

Who minds everybody’s business rather than his own?

Sammy Jay!

Who’s forever shrieking in a loud unpleasant tone?

Sammy Jay!

Who goes prying, peeking,

Through the woodland sneaking?

Who’s the greatest scamp and mischief-maker ever known?

Sammy Jay!

Of course, it was Sammy who first found out that Peter Rabbit was back in the dear old briar patch. Sammy took it into his head to fly over there the very morning of Peter’s home-coming. Indeed, little Miss Fuzzytail, who was now Mrs. Peter, hadn’t had time to half see the dear old briar patch, which, you know, was to be her new home, when Peter saw Sammy Jay coming. Now Peter was not quite ready to have all the world know that there was a Mrs. Peter. They wanted to keep by themselves for a little while and just be happy with each other. So as soon as Peter saw Sammy Jay headed toward the old briar patch he hid little Mrs. Peter under the thickest sweet briar rose, and then hurried out to the nearest sweet clover patch.

Of course Sammy Jay saw him right away, and of course Sammy was very much surprised.

“Hello, Peter Rabbit! Where’d you come from?” he shouted as he settled himself comfortably in a little poplar tree growing on the edge of the old briar patch.

“O,” said Peter, with a very grand air, “I’ve been on a long journey to see the world.”

“Which means,” said Sammy Jay with a chuckle, “That you’ve been in the Old Pasture all this time, and let me tell you, Peter Rabbit, the Old Pasture is a very small part of the world. By the way, Tommy Tit the Chickadee was down here the other day and told us all about you. He said that you had fallen in love with little Miss Fuzzytail and he guessed that you were going to make your home up there. What’s the matter? Did her father, Old Jed Thumper, drive you out?”

“No, he didn’t,” snapped Peter angrily. “It’s none of your business what I came home for, Sammy Jay, but I’ll tell you just the same. I came home because I wanted to.”

Sammy chuckled, for he dearly loves to tease Peter and make him angry. Then the imp of mischief who seems always to live just under that smart cap of Sammy's prompted him to ask, "Did you come home alone?"

Now Peter couldn't say "yes," for that would be an untruth, and whatever faults Peter may have he is at least truthful. So he just pretended not to have heard Sammy's question.

Now when Sammy had asked the question, he had thought nothing about it. It had just popped into his head by way of something to say. But Sammy Jay is sharp, and he noticed right away that Peter didn't answer, but began to talk about other things.

"Ha, ha!" thought Sammy to himself, "I believe he didn't come alone. I wonder now if he brought Miss Fuzzytail with him."

Right away Sammy began to peer down into the old briar patch, twisting and turning so that he could see in every direction, and all the time talking as fast as his tongue could go. Two or three times he flew out over the old briar patch, pretending to try to catch moths, but really so that he could look down into certain hiding places. It was the last time that he did this that he spied little Mrs. Peter, who was, you know, Miss Fuzzytail. At once Sammy Jay started for the Green Forest, screaming at the top of his voice:

"Peter Rabbit's married! Peter Rabbit's married!"

(*Mrs. Peter Rabbit*, Chapter 22, "Sammy Jay Becomes Curious")

STORY 461. August 5, 1913

Peter Rabbit Introduces Mrs. Peter

Peter Rabbit made a wry face as he listened to Sammy Jay shrieking at the top of his voice as he flew through the Green Forest and over the Green Meadows, "Peter Rabbit's married! Peter Rabbit's married!" He saw the Merry Little Breezes who, you know, are the children of Old Mother West Wind, start for the dear old briar patch as soon as they heard Sammy Jay, and he knew that they would be only the first of a lot of visitors. He hurried to where Mrs. Peter, who had been little Miss Fuzzytail, was hiding under a sweetbriar rose.

"Do you hear what that mischief maker, Sammy Jay, is screaming?" asked Peter.

Mrs. Peter nodded. "Don't—don't you think it sounds kind of—well, kind of nice, Peter?" she asked in a bashful sort of way.

Peter chuckled. "It sounds more than kind of nice to me," said he. "Do you know, I used to think that Sammy Jay never did and never could say anything nice, but I've just changed my mind. Though he isn't saying it to be nice, it really is the nicest thing I've ever heard him say. We haven't been able to keep our secret, so I think the very best thing we can do is to invite everybody to call. Then we can get it over with and have a little time to ourselves. Here come the Merry Little Breezes, and I know that they will

be glad to take the invitations for us.”

Mrs. Peter agreed, for she thought that anything Peter did or suggested was just about right. So the Merry Little Breezes were soon skipping and dancing over the Green Meadows and through the Green Forest with this message:

“Mr and Mrs Peter Rabbit will be at home in the old briar patch to their friends tomorrow afternoon at shadow-time.”

“Why did you make it at shadow-time?” asked Mrs Peter.

“Because that will give all our friends a chance to come,” replied Peter. “Those who sleep through the day will have waked up, and those who sleep through the night will not have gone to bed. Besides, it will be safer for some of the smallest of them if there are black shadows for them to hide in on their way here.”

“How thoughtful you are,” said little Mrs. Peter with a little sigh of happiness.

Of course, every one who could walk, creep, or fly, headed for the old briar patch the next day at shadow-time, for almost every one knows and loves Peter Rabbit, and, of course, was very anxious to meet Mrs Peter. From the Smiling Pool came Billy Mink, Little Joe Otter, Jerry Muskrat, Spotty the Turtle, and old Grandfather Frog. From the Green Forest came Bobby Coon, Uncle Billy Possum, and Mrs. Possum, Prickly Porky the Porcupine, Whitefoot the Woodmouse, Happy Jack the Gray Squirrel, Chatterer the Red Squirrel, Blacky the Crow, Sammy Jay, Ol’ Mistah Buzzard, Mistah Mockingbird, and Stickytoes the Treetoad. From the Green Meadows came Danny Meadow Mouse, Old Mr. Toad, Digger the Badger, Jimmy Skunk, and Striped Chipmunk, who lives near the old stone wall between the edge of the Green Meadows and the Green Forest. Johnny and Polly Chuck came down from the old orchard, and Drummer the Woodpecker came from the same place.

Of course Old Man Coyote paid his respects and when he came everybody but Prickly Porky and Digger the Badger and Jimmy Skunk made way for him with great respect. Granny and Reddy Fox and Hooty the Owl didn’t call, but they sat where they could look on and make fun. You see, Peter had fooled all three so many times that they felt none too friendly.

Very proud looked Peter as he stood under a bramble bush with Mrs. Peter by his side and introduced her to his many friends, and very sweet and modest and retiring looked little Mrs. Peter as she sat beside him. Everybody said that she was “too sweet for anything,” and when Reddy Fox overheard that remark he grinned and said:

“Not for me! She can’t be too sweet for me, and I hope I’ll have a chance to find out just how sweet she is.”

What do you suppose he meant?

(Mrs. Peter Rabbit, Chapter 23)

STORY 462. August 6, 1913.

Danny Meadow Mouse Warns Peter Rabbit

Danny Meadow Mouse waited until all the rest of Peter Rabbit's friends had left the old briar patch after paying their respects to Peter and Mrs. Peter. He waited for two reasons, did Danny Meadow Mouse. In the first place he had seen old Granny Fox and Reddy Fox hanging about a little way off, and though they had disappeared after a while Danny had an idea they were not far away, but were hiding so that they might catch him on his way home. Of course, he hadn't the slightest intention of giving them the chance. He had made up his mind to ask Peter if he might spend the night in a corner of the old briar patch, and he was very sure that Peter would say he might, for he and Peter are very good friends, very good friends indeed.

The second reason Danny had for waiting was this very friendship. You see, Peter had been away from the Green Meadows so long that Danny felt sure he couldn't know all about how things were there now, and so he wanted to warn Peter that the Green Meadows were not nearly as safe as before Old Man Coyote had come there to live. So Danny waited, and when all the rest of the callers had left he called Peter to one side, where little Mrs Peter couldn't hear. Danny stood up on his hind legs so as to whisper in one of Peter's ears.

"Do you know that Old Man Coyote is the most dangerous enemy we have, Peter Rabbit? Do you know that?"

Peter Rabbit shook his head. "I don't believe that, Danny," said he. "His terrible voice has frightened you so that you just think him as bad as he sounds. Why, Old Man Coyote is a friend of mine!"

Then he told Danny how Old Man Coyote had done him a good turn in the Old Pasture in return for a good turn Peter had once done him, and how he said that he always paid his debts.

Danny Meadow Mouse looked doubtful, "What else did he say?" he demanded.

"Nothing, excepting that we were even now," replied Peter.

"Ha!" said Danny Meadow Mouse.

The way he said it made Peter turn to look at him sharply.

"Ha!" said Danny again. "If you are even why you don't owe him anything, and he doesn't owe you anything. Watch out, Peter Rabbit! Watch out! I would stick pretty close to the old briar patch with Mrs. Peter if I were you, I would indeed. You used to think old Granny Fox pretty smart, but Old Man Coyote is smarter. Yes, sir, he is smarter! And every one of the rest of us has got to be smarter than ever before to keep out of his clutches. Watch out, Peter Rabbit, if you and Old Man Coyote are even! Now, if you don't mind, I'll curl up in my old hiding place for the night. I really don't dare go back home tonight."

Of course Peter told Danny Meadow Mouse that he was welcome to spend the

night in the old briar patch, and thanked Danny for his warning as he bade him good night. But Peter never carries his trouble with him for long, and by the time he had rejoined little Mrs. Peter he was very much inclined to laugh at Danny's fears.

"What did that funny little Meadow Mouse have to say?" asked Mrs. Peter.

Peter told her and then added: "But I don't believe we have anything to fear from Old Man Coyote. You know he is my friend."

"But I don't know that he is mine!" replied little Mrs. Peter, and the way she said it made Peter look at her anxiously. "I believe Danny Meadow Mouse is right," she continued. "Oh, Peter, you will watch out, won't you?"

And Peter promised her that he would.

(Mrs. Peter Rabbit, Chapter 24)

STORY 463. August 7, 1913

Peter Rabbit's Heedlessness Brings Danger

Heedlessness is just the twin of thoughtlessness, you know.

And where you find them both at once there trouble's sure to grow.

Peter Rabbit didn't mean to be heedless. No, indeed! O my, no! Peter thought so much of Mrs. Peter, who, you remember, used to be little Miss Fuzzytail, that he meant to be so thoughtful that she never would have a thing to worry about. But Peter was heedless. He always had been heedless. That is the worst of a bad habit—you can try to let go of it, but it won't let go of you.

So it was with Peter. He had been heedless so long that now he actually didn't know when he was heedless.

Now, when there was nobody but himself to think about, and no one to worry about him, his heedlessness, didn't so much matter. If anything had happened to him then there, would have been no one to suffer. But now all this was changed. You see, there was little Mrs. Peter. At first Peter had been perfectly content to stay with her in the dear old briar patch. He had led her through all his private little paths, and they had planned where they would make two or three more. He had shown her all his secret hiding places, and the shortest way to the sweet clover patch. He had pointed out where the Lone Little Path came down to the edge of the Green Forest, and so out on to the Green Meadows. He had shown her where the Crooked Little Path came down the hill. Little Mrs. Peter had been delighted with everything, and not once had she complained of being homesick for the Old Pasture.

But after a little while Peter began to get uneasy. You see, in the days before Old Man Coyote had come to live on the Green Meadows, Peter had come and gone about as he pleased. Of course he had to watch out for old Granny and Reddy Fox, but he had had to watch out for them ever since he was a baby and so he didn't fear them very much in spite of their smartness. You see he felt quite as smart as they, and perhaps a

little bit smarter. Anyway, they never had caught him and he didn't believe they ever would. So he had come and gone as he pleased, and poked his nose into everybody's business and gossiped with everybody.

Then he had gone away up to the Old Pasture, where he had stayed a long time, and where, as you know, he had found little Miss Fuzzytail, who was now little Mrs. Peter.

Of course it was quite natural that Peter should want to call on all his old friends and visit the Green Forest, the Laughing Brook and the Smiling Pool, and probably Mrs. Peter wouldn't have worried very much if it hadn't been for the warning left by Danny Meadow Mouse. Danny had said that Old Man Coyote was more to be feared than all the Hawk family and all the Fox family together, because he was smarter and slyer than any of them. At first Peter had looked very serious, but after Danny had gone back to his own home Peter had laughed at Danny for being so afraid, and he began to go farther and farther away from the safe old briar patch.

One day he had ventured as far as half way up the Crooked Little Path. He was thinking so hard of a surprise he was planning for little Mrs. Peter that he forgot to watch out and almost ran into Old Man Coyote before he saw him. There was a hungry look, such a hungry look, in Old Man Coyote's eyes as he grinned and said, "Good morning," that Peter didn't even stop to be polite. He remembered that Jimmy Skunk's old house was near and he reached it just one jump ahead of Old Man Coyote.

"I thought you said that we were friends," panted Peter, as he heard Mr. Coyote sniffing at the doorway.

"So we were until I had paid my debt to you. Now that I've paid that we are even, and it is everybody watch out for himself," replied Old Man Coyote. "But don't forget that I always pay my debts, Peter Rabbit."

(Mrs. Peter Rabbit, Chapter 24, "Peter Rabbit's Heedlessness")

STORY 464. August 8, 1913

Peter Rabbit Listens to Mrs Peter

Peter Rabbit was glad enough to get back to the dear old briar patch after his narrow escape from Old Man Coyote by dodging into Jimmy Skunk's old house half-way up the hill. And little Mrs. Peter was glad enough to have him, you may be sure. She had been watching Peter when he so heedlessly almost ran into Old Man Coyote, and it had seemed to her as if her heart stopped beating until Peter reached the safety of that old house of Jimmy Skunk's just one jump ahead. Then she saw Old Man Coyote hide in the grass nearby and she was terribly, terribly afraid that Peter would be heedless again and come out, thinking that Mr. Coyote had gone.

Poor little Mrs. Peter! She was so anxious that she couldn't sit still. No, sir, she just couldn't sit still. She felt that she just had to do something to warn Peter. She stole out from the dear old briar patch and half-way to where Old Man Coyote was hiding.

He was so busy watching the doorway of the old house where Peter was hiding that he didn't notice her at all. Little Mrs. Peter found a bunch of tall grass behind which she could sit up and still not be seen. So there she sat without moving for a long, long time, never once taking her eyes from Old Man Coyote and the doorway of the old house. By-and-by she saw Peter poke his nose out to see if the way was clear. Old Man Coyote saw him, too, and began to grin. It was a hungry, wicked looking grin and it made little Mrs. Peter very, very angry indeed.

She waited just a minute longer to make sure that Peter was where he could see her, and then she thumped the ground very hard, which, you know, is the way Rabbits signal to each other. Peter heard it right away and thumped back that he would stay right where he was, though right down in his heart Peter thought that little Mrs. Peter was just nervous and foolish, for he was sure that Old Man Coyote had given up and gone away long ago.

Now of course Old Man Coyote heard those thumps, and he knew just what they meant. He knew that he never, never could catch Peter so long as Mrs. Peter was watching him and ready to warn Peter. So he came out of his hiding place with an ugly snarl and sprang toward little Mrs. Peter just to frighten her. He laughed as he watched her run and, all breathless, dive into the dear, safe old briar patch, and then he trotted away to his favorite napping place.

As soon as Peter was sure that he was safe he started for home, and there little Mrs. Peter scolded him soundly for being so heedless and thoughtless.

Peter didn't have a word to say. For a long time he sat thinking and thinking, every once in a while scratching his head as if puzzled. Little Mrs. Peter noticed it.

"What's the matter with you, Peter?" she asked, finally.

"I'm just studying what Old Man Coyote means by telling me one day that he is my friend, and proving it by doing me a good turn, and then trying to catch me the very next time he sees me. I don't understand it," said Peter, shaking his head.

"Oh, you dear old stupid!" replied little Mrs. Peter. "Now you listen to me. You did Old Man Coyote a good turn and he paid you back by doing you a good turn. That made you even, didn't it?"

Peter, nodded.

"Well, then you are right back where you started from and Old Man Coyote doesn't see any reason why he should treat you any differently than at first, and I don't see why he should either, when I come to think it over. I tell you what, Peter, the thing for you to do is to keep doing good turns to Old Man Coyote so that he will always be in debt to you. Then he will always be your friend."

As little Mrs. Peter stopped speaking Peter sprang to his feet. "The very thing!" he cried. "It's a sort of golden rule, and I do believe it will work."

"Of course it will," replied little Mrs. Peter.

(Mrs. Peter Rabbit, Chapter 26)

STORY 465. August 9, 1913

Mistah Mocker Plays a Joke on Mrs. Peter

Mistah Mocker the Mockingbird had been very late in coming up to the Green Meadows from way down South. The truth is he had almost decided not to come. You see, he loves the sunny southland so much, and all who live there love him, so much, that if it hadn't been for Unc' Billy Possum and Ol' Mistah Buzzard he never, never would have thought of leaving even for a little while. Unc' Billy and Ol' Mistah Buzzard are particular friends of his, very particular friends, and he felt that he just had to come up for a little visit.³⁶

Now Mistah Mocker reached the Green Meadows just after Peter Rabbit had brought little Mrs. Peter down from the Old Pasture to live with him in the dear old briar patch. He knew that little Mrs. Peter didn't know anything about him, for he never had visited the Old Pasture where she had spent her life. But he knew all the bird people who do live there, for he had met them in the sunny southland, where they spent the Winter.

"I believe I'll go pay my respects to Mrs. Peter," said Mistah Mocker one day, winking at Ol' Mistah Buzzard. Ol' Mistah Buzzard chuckled and winked back.

"Ah cert'nly hopes yo'all will behave yo'self right proper and not forget that yo' is a member of one of the oldest families in the Souf," said he.

Mistah Mocker looked quite solemn as he promised to behave himself, but there was a twinkle in his eyes as he flew toward the old briar patch. There he hid in a thick tangle of vines. Now it happened that Peter Rabbit had gone over to the sweet clover patch and little Mrs. Peter was quite alone. Somehow she got thinking of her old home, and for the first time she began to feel just a wee, wee bit homesick. It was just then that she heard a familiar voice. Little Mrs. Peter pricked up her ears and smiled happily.

That's the voice of Tommy Tit the Chickadee, and it must be that his wife is with him, for I hear him calling 'Phoebe! Phoebe!' How lovely of them to come down to see me so soon."

Just then she heard another voice, a deep, beautiful, ringing voice, a voice that she loved. It was the voice of Veery the Thrush. "Oh!" cried little Mrs. Peter, and then held her breath so as not to miss one note of the beautiful song. Hardly had the song ended when she heard the familiar voice of Warbles the Vireo³⁷. Little Mrs. Peter clapped her hands happily. "It must be a surprise party by my old friends and neighbors of the Old Pasture!" she cried. "How good of them to come way down here and how glad I shall be to see them!"

With that little Mrs. Peter hurried over to the tangle of vines from which all the voices seemed to come and eagerly peered this way and that way for a sight of her friends. But all she saw was a stranger wearing a very sober-colored suit. He was very

³⁶ STORY 236, 1912.

³⁷ "Warbles" changed to "Redeye" in the book version.

Illustrations. August 4, 1913 to August 9, 1913.



460.Sammy Jay is Curious About New Mrs Peter



461.Peter Rabbit Introduces Mrs Peter.



462.Danny Meadow Mouse Warns Peter Rabbit



463. Peter Rabbit's Heedlessness Brings Danger



464.Peter Rabbit Listens to Mrs Peter



465.Mistah Mocker Plays a Joke on Mrs Peter

polite and told her that he was an old friend of Peter Rabbit's.

"If you are a friend of Peter's then you are a friend of mine," said little Mrs. Peter very prettily. "Have you seen anybody in this tangle of vines since you arrived? I am sure some friends of mine are here, but I haven't been able to find them."

"No," said the stranger, who was of course Mistah Mocker the Mockingbird, "I haven't seen any one here, and I don't think there has been any one here but myself."

"O, yes, indeed there has!" cried little Mrs. Peter. "I heard their voices and I couldn't possibly be mistaken in those, especially the beautiful voice of Veery the Thrush. I would like very much to find them."

Mistah Mocker had the grace to look ashamed of himself when he saw how disappointed little Mrs. Peter was. Very softly he began to sing the song of Veery the Thrush.

Little Mrs. Peter looked up quickly. "There it is!" she cried. "There," she stopped with her mouth gaping wide open. She suddenly realized that it was Mistah Mocker who was singing.

"I—I'm very sorry," he stammered. "I did it just for a joke and not to make you feel bad. Will you forgive me?"

"Yes," replied little Mrs. Peter. "If you will come here often at shadow time and sing to me." And Mistah Mocker promised that he would.

(Mrs. Peter Rabbit, Chapter 27)

STORY 466. August 11, 1913

Chatterer the Red Squirrel Tells the Wrong Story

It was nothing new for Chatterer, the Red Squirrel, to tell a wrong story. Indeed, Chatterer has told so many wrong stories that no one believes him even when he tells the truth, which, of course, is a dreadful state of affairs. He is a great mischief-maker, and never so happy as when he has started trouble among his neighbors in the Green Forest. But, like a great many other wrong-doers, he likes to appear honest and truthful, and when any one suggests that he isn't he grows very angry and pretends to feel very much injured. So this time, when Drummer the Woodpecker accused him of having stolen an egg from Drummer's nest in an old apple tree, Chatterer flew into such a rage at the very idea of Drummer suspecting him that Drummer actually began to think that it might be that he was mistaken.

Just as soon as Chatterer saw that Drummer was beginning to think he might be mistaken Chatterer made up a story in which there wasn't one bit of truth, but which he meant should set Drummer to watching some one else.

"This will give me a chance to steal the rest of the eggs while someone else is blamed for it," he thought to himself.

You see, he really had stolen that first egg. So he told Drummer that he had been

running along the old stonewall that morning when he just happened to look up in the old apple tree, where Drummer's nest was, and who should he see just pulling his head out of the doorway but Sammy Jay. Sammy had something white in his mouth, and while Chatterer couldn't be sure about it he thought it was an egg. Now that Drummer said that one had been stolen, he was sure that Sammy Jay must be the thief.

Now Drummer knew perfectly well that Sammy Jay steals eggs every chance he gets, and it so happened that he had himself caught a glimpse of Sammy's sky-blue coat in the old orchard that very morning. So he was all the more ready to believe Chatterer in spite of the fact that he knew him to be every bit as bad a thief as Sammy Jay. He looked very sharply at Chatterer, but Chatterer looked so innocent as he sat with his hands folded across his white waistcoat that Drummer begged pardon for accusing him, and then told him of the dreadful things he would do to Sammy Jay if he ever caught him around his nest again.

Now Chatterer had told this wrong story about Sammy Jay because Sammy happened to be the first one he thought of. Now as he scampered back to the Green Forest, he chuckled to himself, for he saw that his wrong story might make trouble for Sammy Jay. He hoped it would. He never did love Sammy Jay and now if he could make trouble for Sammy nothing would please him more. Instead of feeling sorry for having told a wrong story, an untruth, he was glad of it.

"I'll get all those eggs of Drummer's and Sammy Jay will get the blame," he chuckled. "Now I must think of some way to get Sammy Jay to visit the old orchard tomorrow morning so that Drummer the Woodpecker will be sure to see him hanging around."

And so from telling one wrong story Chatterer was already planning to tell another. It's always that way.

One little deed you know is wrong,
One little story not quite true,
And soon another follows it
Because it's easier to do³⁸.

STORY 467. August 12, 1913

Drummer the Woodpecker is Robbed Again

Drummer the Woodpecker was making the old orchard ring with the rat-tat-tat he was beating on a hollow limb of an old apple tree. It was an angry rat-a-tat. No one could hear it without knowing that Drummer the Woodpecker was in a great rage. He was. There was no doubt about it. But who wouldn't be after being robbed a second time? And that is just what had happened to Drummer. Yes, sir, he had been robbed a second time. He had left his house unguarded for just a few minutes and when he returned the beautiful white egg of which he and Mrs. Drummer were so proud was gone. This would have been bad enough if the very same thing hadn't happened only

38 This story was the first to be illustrated by Harrison Cady. Cady would illustrate the feature until its end in 1960. For the first six weeks he signed his work, "R. Adams."

the day before.

Drummer the Woodpecker was sure that he knew who the robber was. Hadn't Chatterer the Red Squirrel seen Sammy Jay pulling his head out of Drummer's doorway with something white in his mouth? He said that he had, anyway, and Drummer believed him. Now there couldn't be any doubt about it, for there, just at the foot of the tree, was a feather and it was blue and white. More than that, there was the harsh voice of Sammy Jay over in another part of the old orchard this very minute.

Drummer stopped beating the rat-a- ta-tat on the hollow limb and started for the place where he heard the voice of Sammy Jay. Like a red-capped fury he rushed at Sammy Jay, and it is well for Sammy that he saw him coming.

"What's the matter with you, Drummer?" demanded Sammy, angrily.

"A pretty question for you to ask!" snapped Drummer the Woodpecker, as he once more rushed at Sammy Jay. "I'll teach you to rob me of my eggs, you thief!"

Now of course all the other birds in the old orchard hurried up to see what all the fuss was about, and no sooner did they hear Drummer the Woodpecker call Sammy Jay a thief than they all took up the cry and began to dart at Sammy Jay and pull his feathers out. And of course Sammy flew into a terrible rage and called everybody names. But names don't really hurt, though some folks act as if they did, while sharp-pointed bills do, and Sammy soon found that there were so many of these that his beautiful blue coat would be torn all to pieces if he didn't get away. So screaming with rage, twisting and dodging this way and that way, Sammy flew to the shelter of the Green Forest, while after him for a little way flew all the birds of the old orchard, with Drummer the Woodpecker in the lead and all screaming at the top of their lungs, "Thief! Thief! Thief!"

Sammy hid in a thick hemlock tree in the darkest part of the Green Forest and the more he thought about how he had been treated the angrier he grew.

"Drummer the Woodpecker had no right to say that I stole his eggs! Why, I don't even know where his house is! Somebody else stole the eggs and I'm blamed for it without any cause whatever," he complained bitterly. You see he quite overlooked the fact that people are judged by their acts in the past quite as much as by what they may or may not do in the present, and because everybody knew that he had stolen whenever he got the chance every one believed right away that he had stolen the eggs of Drummer the Woodpecker. And that was what hurt. He was being blamed for something he didn't do at all.

So Sammy Jay had found at last.
That he must suffer for the past.

STORY 468. August 13, 1913

Chatterer the Red Squirrel Tells Another Untruth

All the time Sammy Jay was sulking in the thick hemlock tree in the Green

Forest and working himself into a great rage at the thought that he should be blamed for something which he hadn't done, Chatterer, the Red Squirrel, was chuckling to himself in a hollow chestnut tree not far away. It was a wicked chuckle, that chuckle of Chatterer. You see, he was the real thief. It was he who had found the home of Drummer the Woodpecker and from it stolen a beautiful white egg. Then, as if that were not bad enough, he had told a wrong story. He had told Drummer that the thief was Sammy Jay.

Now an untruth is bad enough in itself, but one untruth usually leads to another and sometimes to deeds that are even worse. It was so with Chatterer. He wasn't satisfied with telling Drummer that Sammy Jay was the thief. No, sir, he wasn't satisfied with that. As soon as he saw that Drummer believed him, he began to plan how he could steal again without being found out and put the blame on Sammy Jay. He knew where Sammy Jay lived and he hurried over there when he knew that Sammy was somewhere else. Just as he had hoped, he found a blue and white feather on the ground and with this he scampered home as fast as he could go.

The next morning Chatterer was hiding in the old orchard bright and early. He waited until Mr. and Mrs. Drummer left their home for a few minutes while they got their breakfast. Then, looking this way and that way to make sure that no one saw him, Chatterer whisked into the hollow, which was the home of Mr. and Mrs. Drummer, and in a flash was out again with the beautiful white egg which he found there. And what do you think he had left behind him? Why, that blue and white feather of Sammy Jay's which he had found the day before. Of course, when Drummer, the Woodpecker, came back he saw that feather right away, and of course he was sure then that Sammy Jay was the thief, just as Chatterer had said. It was then that Drummer had led all the birds of the old orchard in driving Sammy Jay out.

Those stolen eggs had tasted so good to Chatterer that he made up his mind that he must have some more. He felt sure that after being robbed twice Drummer would keep a very close watch, so he must think of some plan to get Drummer and Mrs Drummer away from their home at the same time. As he sat chuckling wickedly over the trouble he had made for Sammy Jay a new idea came to him. He would send a message to Drummer early the next morning saying that Sammy Jay was in another part of the old orchard and that he was boasting that he wasn't afraid of Drummer, the Woodpecker.

"That will start Drummer off in a hurry and I wouldn't be surprised if Mrs. Drummer went too," thought Chatterer.

So the very next morning Chatterer sent word by Jenny Wren that Sammy Jay was over in the far corner boasting of what he was going to do to Drummer, the Woodpecker. Of course Drummer started off in hot haste.

Now it just happened that Sammy Jay did pass through that part of the old orchard at that very time. He was minding his own business when who should come after him shrieking "Thief! Thief!" but Drummer, the Woodpecker, and immediately all the other birds in the orchard joined him.

Of course Sammy yelled back at them. No sooner did Mrs. Drummer hear his

voice than she left her home unguarded to join in the chase of Sammy Jay. This was Chatterer's chance, and once more he breakfasted on a newly laid egg, while Sammy Jay was being driven back to the Green Forest in disgrace.

STORY 469. August 14, 1913

Mistah Mocker Lends his Voice to Sammy Jay

"Fresh eggs for breakfast every morning certainly are good," said Chatterer the Red Squirrel to himself, and smacked his lips. "If I could only get Sammy Jay to go up to the old orchard this morning, as he did yesterday morning, I almost know that Drummer the Woodpecker and Mrs. Drummer would be so angry at the very sight of him that both would chase him and this would give me a chance to steal another egg from them."

Chatterer tried and tried to think of some plan to get Sammy Jay to visit the old orchard, but he was smart enough to know that if he seemed to want Sammy to go there Sammy would right away begin to suspect who it was who had made Drummer think he was the thief who had stolen the eggs. Of course, this wouldn't do at all. Chatterer had just about given up all hope of having a fresh egg for breakfast that morning when his sharp eyes caught sight of an acquaintance and all in a flash a new plan came into his head—a plan that made him chuckle right out.

Now the acquaintance whom Chatterer had caught a glimpse of was Mistah Mocker the Mockingbird. Chatterer hurried after him.

"Good morning, Mistah Mocker!" he called in his politest manner.

"Good mo'ning, Brer Chatterer," replied Mistah Mocker. "Yo' seem to be feeling very fine this morning. Tell me what you' are laughing about so that Ah may laugh, too."

"Certainly," replied Chatterer, who all the time had been chuckling to himself as if there was some joke too good to keep. "I was just thinking what a lot of fun you must have with that wonderful voice of yours and how easy it must be to fool people."

"It is," replied Mistah Mocker.

"Now there is Sammy Jay," continued Chatterer. "Sammy and Drummer the Woodpecker have quarreled about something and all the other birds in the old orchard have joined with Drummer against Sammy Jay to keep him out of the old orchard. I was thinking what a joke on them it would be if you should hide over in the far corner of the old orchard and then scream like Sammy Jay. How surprised Drummer and all the rest would be when they rushed over there all ready to fight and found that Sammy wasn't there at all. It would be such a joke! I wish you would lend me your voice, Mistah Mocker."

Now Mistah Mocker loves a joke as well as any one, and he could see nothing but harmless fun in Chatterer's plan. So without stopping to think that there might be mischief hidden in it somewhere he promptly replied:

“I will lend you my voice, Brer Chatterer. That is, I’ll go hide and scream like Sammy Jay and we’ll both have a good laugh when we see how surprised Drummer and all the others are when they find that it isn’t Sammy Jay at all.”

“Good!” cried Chatterer. “I’ll go hide where I can see everything.”

So Mistah Mocker waited until Chatterer was hidden where he could see everything, then he flew over to the far corner of the old orchard and began to scream like Sammy Jay. Sure enough, all the birds in the orchard, headed by Drummer the Woodpecker and Mrs. Drummer, came hurrying toward him, crying “Thief! Thief! Thief!” as loudly as ever they could. Chuckling to himself all the time, he kept hidden until they reached the very tree in which he was sitting. Then, laughing fit to kill himself at the joke, he showed himself, expecting every one else to laugh too. But no one did. No sir, no one laughed except Chatterer the Red Squirrel as he scampered away from the home Drummer the Woodpecker with a beautiful white egg, and Mistah Mocker didn’t see him.

STORY 470. August 15, 1913

Mistah Mocker Grows Wiser but Sadder

When Mistah Mocker the Mockingbird, agreed to lend his wonderful voice to the plan of Chatterer the Red Squirrel for playing a joke on all the little feathered people of the old orchard, he didn’t dream that it could be anything but a joke, the most harmless kind of a joke. Of course, he knew that Sammy Jay is a thief and that none of the other birds like him, and always try to drive him away. It seemed to him that it would be the greatest kind of a joke to hide and then scream like Sammy Jay until the other birds came hurrying to drive him away, and that when they found that it wasn’t Sammy Jay at all, but their friend Mr. Mocker, they would all have a great laugh at the way they had been fooled. You see it never entered his head that there could be any harm in it—that Chatterer the Red Squirrel was all the time planning to take that chance to steal from Drummer the Woodpecker.

But that is just what Chatterer was planning and just what he did do. And all the time he chuckled to himself to think how easily he had gotten Mistah Mocker to help him. But Mistah Mocker didn’t know this. So when at last he showed himself he didn’t know what to make of it. He stopped laughing himself and stared first at Drummer the Woodpecker, then then at Mrs. Drummer, and after that at each of the others in turn. There wasn’t even a smile anywhere. Instead there were angry looks. Then Drummer the Woodpecker darted at him fiercely and tweaked a feather from Mistah Mocker’s coat.

“So you’re a friend of Sammy Jay, are you?” he snapped. “You will try to fool us while he sneaks around and robs our nests, will you? Take that and that!” and with each “that” his sharp bill struck poor Mistah Mocker. Then without waiting for Mistah Mocker to explain Drummer and Mrs. Drummer hurried back to their home, for they suspected that Sammy Jay had taken this chance while they were away to rob them of the beautiful white egg they had left in the bottom of their nest. They were sure of

it when they reached home and found the egg gone, and straightway they told their neighbors.

When the other birds saw Drummer the Woodpecker dart at poor Mistah Mocker they all did the same thing and they screamed so loudly that Mistah Mocker couldn't make himself heard. Now he isn't a coward. O, my, no! Mistah Mocker isn't a coward! But what could he do against so many? Nothing, just nothing at all, but turn tail and fly away. And this wasn't so easy, either. At last he reached the Green Forest, and one by one the other birds returned to their homes in the old orchard until he was quite alone.

Dear me, dear me, what a looking sight Mistah Mocker was! His coat was all rumpled up and torn, and he was very hurt, for some of those bills were very sharp. But his feelings were hurt even more. He couldn't understand it at all.

"It was all a joke," he kept saying over and over to himself. "It was all a joke." Then, as he thought it all over, he remembered a saying he had once heard a long, long time before:

The thing that seems a joke to you
To others may not seem so.
A prank you harmless mean to be
Your friends may fail to deem so.

And all the time, safe in his hollow tree, Chatterer the Red Squirrel was smacking his lips over the fresh egg he had stolen from Drummer the Woodpecker and chuckling wickedly over the trouble that he had gotten Sammy Jay and Mistah Mocker into.

STORY 471. August 16, 1913

Mistah Mocker and Sammy Jay as Conspirators

When one is feeling very bad
It somehow seems to help a lot
To find that some one else you know
Has into trouble also got.

At least that is what Mistah Mocker the Mockingbird says, and he ought to know. Never in all his life had he felt more miserable than when he sat all alone hidden in the Green Forest trying to smooth out his torn and rumpled coat. You see it had been badly pulled to pieces by the little feathered people of the old orchard, when they found that Mistah Mocker had played a joke on them with his wonderful voice and had made them think that he was Sammy Jay. They didn't see any joke in it. No, sir, they didn't see the joke at all. Instead, they were very, very angry.

So poor Mistah Mocker sat moaning and mumbling to himself and wondering if it wouldn't be best for him to leave the Green Forest and the Green Meadow and fly back to his old home way down South. Right when he was feeling the worst, he heard a voice over in a nearby hemlock tree. It was a harsh, scolding voice. It was the voice of Sammy Jay, and he was talking to himself. Mistah Mocker listened. It wasn't a polite

Illustrations. August 11, 1913 to August 16, 1913.



466. Chatterer the Red Squirrel Tells the Wrong Story
Drummer telling Chatterer what he would do to Sammy Jay.



467. Drummer the Woodpecker is Robbed Again
"What's the matter with you, Drummer?" demanded Sammy Jay angrily.



468. Chatterer the Red Squirrel Tells Another Untruth
Mr and Mrs Drummer leaving their home.



469. Mistah Mocker Lends his Voice to Sammy Jay
Chatterer called to see Mistah Mocker.



470. Mistah Mocker Grows Wiser but Sadder
"It was all a joke," he kept saying over and over to himself.



471. Mistah Mocker and Sammy Jay as Conspirators
"Mo'ning, Brer Jay," said Mistah Mocker politely.

thing to do, but he did it and for a while he forgot all about his own troubles.

"It's bad enough to get in trouble for things I do, but to be blamed for things I don't do is more than an honest Jay can stand!" scolded Sammy.

Mistah Mocker almost laughed aloud when he heard Sammy say that, for he knew, as everybody knows, that there is no such thing as an honest Jay. But Sammy spoke as if he really meant what he said, and his feelings seemed to be so exactly like Mistah Mocker's own feelings that right away Mistah Mocker began to have a friendly feeling for Sammy Jay. He was just going to speak when Sammy began to talk to himself again.

"Drummer the Woodpecker has no right to say that I have stolen his eggs," said Sammy. "Why, I don't even know which tree he has his home in! Some one else has been stealing them and I get all the blame without the eggs. It wouldn't be so bad if I had had the eggs." Sammy unconsciously smacked his lips at the thought and Mistah Mocker had to smile in spite of his troubles.

Then Mistah Mocker grew very serious and scratched, his head thoughtfully. "It seems to me," he murmured to himself, "it seems to me that Brer Jay is in the same kind of trouble that Ah am mahself, and Ah reckons we alls better get our haid together and find out what it all means. Yes, sah. Ah reckons that is just what we alls better do!"

With that Mistah Mocker came out of his hiding place and flew over to the hemlock tree, where Sammy Jay was still scolding to himself.

"Good mo'ning, Brer Jay," said Mistah Mocker politely.

"Tisn't a good morning!" snapped Sammy Jay. "It's the worst morning I ever knew!"

"Yo' seem to have something powerful disturbing on your mind, Brer Jay," said Mistah Mocker, just as if he hadn't noticed Sammy's bad temper.

Sammy opened his mouth to make a sharp reply, but instead stared so hard at Mistah Mocker that he forgot to close it. You see, he had just noticed how rumpled and torn Mistah Mocker's coat was. At last he found his voice.

"It seems to me that you look very much as I feel, Mistah Mocker," said he. "Have YOU been driven out of the old orchard?"

"Yes, sah, Ah sho' have," replied Mistah Mocker with a twinkle in his eyes.

"What!" cried Sammy, and in his surprise he nearly lost his balance. You see, he hadn't for a minute supposed that this was really the case.

"Yes," replied Mistah Mocker. "Ah done been driven from the old orchard by all mah ol' friends and Ah reckons yo' done have the same trouble. Don't yo' think we better put our haid together and find out what it all means?"

"I certainly do," said Sammy Jay promptly, and they did.

Sammy Jay and Mistah Mocker Compare Notes

When Sammy Jay and Mistah Mocker the Mockingbird put their heads together it didn't take them very long to decide that some one was at the bottom of all the trouble they had had in the old orchard. When Sammy told Mistah Mocker that he hadn't stolen the eggs of Drummer the Woodpecker of course Mistah Mocker believed him. You see, he had overheard Sammy saying this very thing to himself, and people usually tell the truth to themselves.

"Have you got any enemies?" asked Mistah Mocker.

Sammy gave him a funny sidelong look. "Everybody's my enemy," he replied shortly.

"Not everybody, Bre'r Jay! Not everybody!" exclaimed Mistah Mocker.

Sammy laughed. "I didn't mean to include you, Mistah Mocker," said he, "though It looks to me as if you were trying to get me into trouble when you used my voice to fool your friends in the old orchard."

Mistah Mocker hung his head and looked a little bit ashamed. "That's so, it does look so, Bre'r Jay; it cert'nly does look that way," he confessed. "But Ah gives yo' mah word of honor, sah, Ah never thought of that. It was just a joke."

"Jokes that hurt other people are pretty poor things," replied Sammy, and to have heard him you would have thought that he had never done a mean thing or unkind thing in his life. "What made you think of that particular joke?"

"Why, Ah didn't think of it myself. Bre'r Chatterer the Red Squirrel gave me the idea," said Mistah Mocker, scratching his head thoughtfully.

"Ha!" cried Sammy Jay, and his eyes snapped. "Tell me all about it."

So Mistah Mocker told how he met Chatterer and how the latter had told him that Sammy Jay and Drummer the Woodpecker had quarreled and what a good joke it would be for Mistah Mocker to hide in the old orchard and with his wonderful voice make Drummer and his neighbors think that it was Sammy Jay hidden there.

Sammy Jay didn't wait to hear any more. "That's the one that's at the bottom of all our trouble!" he cried excitedly. "I might have known it. They call me a thief, and I suppose that sometimes I do steal, but I'm honest compared to Chatterer the Red Squirrel. Why, I've known him to steal from his own father, and I wouldn't do a thing like that. No, sir; I wouldn't do a thing like that!" Sammy swelled himself up and tried to look the picture of all that is good. "You can depend upon it that Chatterer stole those eggs from Drummer the Woodpecker and laid it onto me. And he used you to get Drummer out of the way. Yes, sir, he used you to help him."

Mistah Mocker stared a long minute at Sammy Jay. Then he flew into a terrible rage at the thought of how he had been tricked. Ah believe you are right, Bre'r Jay! Ah

believe you are right!" he cried.

"I know I'm right," snapped Sammy. "When you have known Chatterer as long as I have you will learn that he hasn't an honest hair in his coat. My, but you were innocent to let him fool you that way!"

Mistah Mocker hung his head again. "Ah reckons Ah was," he said. "But the question now is what are we going to do about it?"

"Get even!" snapped Sammy Jay "Get even with Chatterer! You leave it to me and I'll think out a plan."

STORY 473. August 19, 1913

Mistah Mocker Pays a Visit to Johnny Chuck

Sammy Jay had thought out a plan to get even with Chatterer the Red Squirrel for the trouble he had got Sammy and Mistah Mocker into with their neighbors of the old orchard.

"Of course, it won't do for either of us to call on any of our feathered friends in the old orchard to ask any questions. They won't listen to a word but will pitch into us before we can say a word, just as they did before," said Sammy. "I never could understand why people are always ready to believe the bad things they hear and never listen to the good things. When people say I've done bad things which I haven't done at all, I always feel just like going out and doing them then, just out of spite. So, as I was saying, it won't do for either of us to call on our feathered neighbors in the old orchard, and yet I want to find out if Chatterer has been seen there lately."

Mistah Mocker scratched his head thoughtfully. "Johnny Chuck lives there now, doesn't he?" he asked.

Sammy's face brightened. "That's so! Why didn't I think of him before?" he exclaimed. "Now while I look around a little in the Green Forest you go call on Johnny Chuck and find out if he has seen Chatterer in the old orchard lately."

Mistah Mocker agreed, and Sammy told him just where to look for Johnny Chuck, down in the far corner of the old orchard. So off he started. Now Mistah Mocker knew that it wouldn't do to let any of the birds who live there see him. You see, all of them were his enemies now because they thought that he had helped Sammy Jay steal the eggs of Drummer the Woodpecker. Of course he hadn't, for Sammy hadn't stolen the eggs at all. But everybody believed he had, and so there was nothing for Mistah Mocker to do but steal up to the old orchard secretly.

It made him feel very uncomfortable, very uncomfortable, indeed. "Ah feel like a sneak," he muttered to himself. "If anybody should see me dodging in and out of the trees and bushes this way, they would be sure that Ah was guilty. Ah don't like it a bit, but Ah reckons there's no help for it."

At last he reached a snug hiding place in an alder tree that grew by the tumbled-

down stone wall close by Johnny Chuck's home in the far corner of the old orchard. He waited and waited and at last when his patience was almost gone Johnny Chuck came out to sit on his doorstep.

"Good mo'ning, Brer Chuck," said Mistah Mocker in a low voice.

"Good morning," replied Johnny, looking up in surprise. "I haven't seen you for a long time. How did you find out where I live?"

"O! a little bird told me," said Mistah Mocker, and then both laughed.

"Yo' sho'ly have a mighty likely place fo' a home, Brer Chuck," continued Mistah Mocker. "Have yo' many neighbors?"

"Not too many, but enough," replied Johnny Chuck. "Drummer the Woodpecker has built his home in that old apple tree, and Winsome Bluebird has a fine family in the next one. Skimmer the Swallow makes his home up here, too. They are very fine neighbors, who mind their own business Mistah Mocker."

Now, when Johnny mentioned Drummer the Woodpecker, Mistah Mocker had to turn his head to hide a smile, for to find out just where his home was one of the things he had come for.

"Yes," he replied, "they sho' are good neighbors; but Ah should think yo' would miss your old friends of the Green Meadows and the Green Forest, Brer Chuck."

"So I would if they didn't come to see me," said Johnny. "Unc' Billy Possum, Jimmy Skunk and Peter Rabbit drop around whenever they are up this way, and lately Chatterer the Red Squirrel has made me a morning call almost every day."

"That's fine," said Mistah Mocker "Now Ah know where yo' live I'll call mahself whenever Ah happen this way Ah reckons Ah must be moving along now, but Ah cert'nly am coming again soon."

"Do," replied Johnny Chuck. "I'll always be glad to see you."

And with that Mistah Mocker returned to the Green Forest the same way he had come, chuckling all the way to think how easily he had found out all he wanted to know.

STORY 474. August 20, 1913

Planning a Trap for Chatterer the Red Squirrel

When Mistah Mocker the Mocking bird reached the Green Forest, he found Sammy Jay waiting for him.

"Well, what did you find out?" asked Sammy eagerly as soon as Mistah Mocker was within hearing distance.

Mistah Mocker didn't say a word until he was near enough to whisper:

"I found out all we want to know," said he, speaking very low and looking this

way and that way to make sure that no one but Sammy Jay could hear him. “Ah found out just which tree the home of Drummer and Woodpecker is in, and Johnny Chuck says that Chatterer the Red Squirrel has visited him in the old orchard every morning lately. Ah guess there isn’t any doubt that he is the thief who has stolen Drummer’s eggs.”

“Doubt!” Sammy Jay’s voice was full of scorn. “Doubt! There isn’t the least bit in the world. The thing we have got to do now is to prove it so that Drummer the Woodpecker and all his friends put the blame on him instead of laying it on me as they have done.”

“Of course that’s the thing to do, but Ah don’t see just how you are going to manage it,” said Mistah Mocker. “Drummer won’t believe us if we tell him, and probably he and his friends won’t give us a chance to even tell them. I have an idea! Why not get Johnny Chuck to tell them? They’ll believe Johnny Chuck.”

“What good will that do?” asked Sammy Jay scornfully. “It might stop Chatterer from stealing any more of Drummer’s eggs, but it wouldn’t punish him for the trouble he has gotten us into by saying that I stole the eggs, would it?”

“No-o, Ah reckon it wouldn’t,” replied Mistah Mocker, and Ah cert-nly would like to have him know how sharp Drummer’s bill is. Ah cert-nly would.” Mistah Mocker looked sadly at the places in his coat where Drummer had pulled the feathers out because he thought that Mistah Mocker had been helping Sammy Jay to steal his eggs.

“I’ve got a plan. We’ll set a trap for Chatterer!” said Sammy Jay, and his eyes sparkled wickedly.

“Set a trap!” exclaimed Mistah Mocker, looking puzzled. “What kind of a trap, Brer Jay?”

“Yes, sir, we’ll set a trap, and Reddy Fox will help us, although he doesn’t know it,” replied Sammy. “This is the way we’ll do it: Chatterer will be sure to visit the old orchard tomorrow morning, hoping that Drummer and Mrs. Drummer will leave their home unguarded for a few minutes.

“I’ll get Reddy Fox to hide behind the old tumbled-down stone wall, and as soon as Chatterer runs across to the old apple tree where Drummer’s home is Reddy will sneak after him and wait for him at the foot of the tree. Then smart Mr Chatterer will be caught!”

“Oh, but something dreadful would happen to him if Brer Fox should catch him!” exclaimed Mistah Mocker. “Ah wouldn’t want anything so dreadful as that to happen to Brer Chatterer, bad as he is.”

“Serve him right!” snapped Sammy Jay, who has no love for Chatterer. “But you needn’t worry about that, Mistah Mocker. Chatterer is no fool and he isn’t going to come down from that tree with Reddy Fox sitting below.”

“That’s so,” said Mistah Mocker, looking very much relieved. “But how do you know that Drummer and Mrs Drummer will leave their home?”

Sammy Jay grinned. "We'll hide until we see Chatterer hanging around," he replied "Then I'll show myself near Drummer's home and he and Mrs. Drummer and all their friends will chase me just as they did before. Of course Chatterer will think this is just the chance he has been waiting for to steal those eggs and he won't lose any time about it. As soon as he reaches the tree where Drummer's home is you fly over there screaming 'thief' at the top of your lungs. Then I'll lead the others back there and we'll see some fun."

Mistah Mocker thought the plan over for a few minutes. Then he chuckled.

"Ah believe it will work," said he.

"I know it will," replied Sammy.

STORY 475. August 21, 1913

Sammy Jay Calls on Reddy Fox with an Idea

As sure as day turns into night
And night must turn to day.
For every naughty thing you do
You'll surely have to pay.

Chatterer the Red Squirrel ought to have known this. Probably right down deep in his heart he did know it, only he wouldn't admit it, even to himself. He had stolen the eggs of Drummer the Woodpecker, and had told Drummer that Sammy Jay was the thief. One wrong story had led to another, and these wrong stories had got Sammy Jay into no end of trouble. And all the time Chatterer had chuckled wickedly to himself and had enjoyed the stolen eggs and had thought himself very smart, so smart that he never would be found out.

But Sammy Jay is quite as smart as Chatterer, and with the help of Mistah Mocker the Mockingbird he had found out who was to blame for all the trouble they had got into. Now they had planned a trap for Chatterer. Sammy had come to visit Reddy Fox, who is always ready to listen to any plans for mischief and do his share if he is sure that there is no danger in it for him.

"How does it happen," asked Sammy Jay, "that you have never caught that mischief-maker, Chatterer the Red Squirrel?"

"Pooh! I never have really tried," replied Reddy, which wasn't the truth at all, for he had tried very often. "I have plenty to eat without going to the trouble of trying to catch Chatterer, but if I really wanted to I could do it easy enough."

Sammy Jay turned his head to hide a smile, for many times he had heard Chatterer calling Reddy names for trying to catch him.

"O," said Sammy, "I had an idea that Chatterer was too smart for you, but I see I was mistaken. I was just going to suggest that if you was to hide tomorrow morning behind the old stone wall near Johnny Chuck's home in the far corner of the old

orchard you would have a splendid chance to catch Chatterer.”

“I happen to know that he will try to steal an egg from Drummer the Woodpecker, and, of course, if you Just happen to be at the foot of the tree when he comes down, why, he will just walk right into your mouth. But, of course, if you can catch him so easily this doesn’t interest you. I merely thought I might be doing you a good turn.”

Reddy Fox pretended to yawn. “Thanks, just the same, Sammy,” said he. “Chatterer isn’t worth the bother of catching, but I’m just as much obliged to you for thinking of me.”

“That’s all right,” replied Sammy. “I’m sorry not to have been of service to you. I always like to do a neighbor a good turn, and perhaps I’ll have better luck next time.”

With that off he flew to hunt up Mistah Mocker. “He pretended that he didn’t care anything about Chatterer and could catch him any time he wanted to, and all the time I could see a hungry look growing in those yellow eyes of his. He’ll be there all right tomorrow morning, chuckled Sammy Jay as he told Mistah Mocker about his call on Reddy.

And that is just exactly what Reddy Fox was planning as he stretched himself out in his favorite resting place. “Of course it wouldn’t have done to have let Sammy Jay think I really wanted to catch Chatterer, for like as not he would have gone straight over to warn Chatterer. My, but a breakfast of Red Squirrel would taste good! I’ll be hiding behind that old stone wall all bright and early tomorrow morning, and we’ll see, Mr Chatterer, if you’ll get away from me this time!” And with that Reddy Fox curled up for a nap and dreamed of catching a dozen Red Squirrels.

STORY 476. August 22, 1913

Chatterer Red Squirrel Falls Into the Trap

In the early morning Chatterer the Red Squirrel left the Green Forest and scampered along the tumbled down stone wall to the far corner of the old orchard. He ducked in and out behind, under and around the stone of the old wall, all the time keeping the sharpest watch with his bright eyes to make sure that no one saw him. He was thinking of the beautiful white eggs which he was sure were in the home of Drummer the Woodpecker in the old apple tree close by Johnny Chuck’s house. He wanted those eggs for his breakfast. It was two days since he had had one, for though he had thought and thought and thought he hadn’t been able to think of a plan to get both Mr. and Mrs. Drummer away from their home together, as he had when he had stolen their first eggs and then laid the blame on Sammy Jay. He hadn’t any plan now, but he just hoped that something might happen to give him the chance he wanted.

Chatterer hid in a hole between two big stones, where he could watch the home of Drummer the Woodpecker, and waited. He was so intent on this that he didn’t look around as he should have, and, so, of course, he didn’t see Reddy Fox hiding behind the wall. Chatterer had about given up hope of anything happening when his sharp eyes caught sight of something that made them sparkle with eagerness. Could it be? Yes, it

was Sammy Jay! There was no mistaking that blue coat. Ha, that was Sammy's voice! Out of his home dashed Drummer the Woodpecker, with Mrs Drummer close behind him, both screaming, "Thief! Thief!" at the top of their lungs, and after them flew all their neighbors, all intent on driving Sammy Jay out of the old orchard.

This was the chance Chatterer had waited and hoped for. Like a little red flash, he scampered across the grass to the apple tree in which Drummer made his home and was half way up it when Mistah Mocker the Mockingbird dashed at him from his hiding place in the next tree shrieking "Thief!" at the top of his voice.

At once Sammy Jay turned in that direction and straight back to the old apple tree he came screaming "Thief!" as loud as he could, and close behind him were Drummer and all his neighbors. Now as soon as Drummer saw Chatterer in the tree, he knew right away what had brought him there and he forgot all about Sammy Jay.

Chatterer saw him coming and, though he isn't a coward, the sight of so many angry birds was too much for him. He turned to run down the trunk and scamper back to the safety of the old stone wall. But he didn't. No, sir, he didn't go a step farther down the tree. Why? Because there, waiting for him, sat Reddy Fox, and Reddy's teeth looked unpleasantly long and sharp, and Reddy himself looked unpleasantly hungry.

But there was no time to sit still and think about it. No, indeed! There were too many sharp bills eager to tear his coat and pull his hair and scratch his face. Like a flash Chatterer scurried around to the other side of the tree trunk. Then began real trouble for Chatterer the Red Squirrel. Round and round the tree, out one branch, across to another, jumping, twisting, dodging, ran Chatterer, with all the birds of the old orchard led by Drummer, the Woodpecker and Sammy Jay darting and striking at him with their sharp bills, and all screaming, "Thief! Thief!" as loud as ever they could. And all the time down below Reddy Fox was dancing about with excitement and hoping that the birds would drive Chatterer out of the tree.

At last, all breathless and torn and bleeding, Chatterer managed to crawl into a little hollow, where even the long bill of Drummer the Woodpecker couldn't reach him. "O, dear!" he sobbed. "I wish I had never thought of those eggs!"

"Or tried to put the blame on some one else," said a voice right outside his hiding place. It was the voice of Sammy Jay, and then Chatterer knew who it was who had been smart enough to find him out and have him so dreadfully punished.

"I'll get even with you, Sammy Jay! See if I don't!" he shrieked. But Sammy Jay only laughed.

STORY 477. August 23, 1913

Drummer the Woodpecker Begs Pardon

Drummer the Woodpecker was troubled in his mind. There was no doubt about it. He even forgot to drum out his happiness when Mrs. Drummer announced the fourth egg in their nest in the snug hollow he had worked so hard to make in the old apple

Illustrations. August 18, 1913 to August 23, 1913.



472. Sammy Jay and Mistah Mocker Compare Notes.
"Have you any enemies?" asked Mistah Mocker.



473. Mistah Mocker Pays a Visit to Johnny Chuck.
"Good morning, Brer Chuck," said Mistah Mocker in a low tone.



474. Planning a Trap for Chatterer the Red Squirrel.
"Good morning, Brer Chuck," said Mistah Mocker in a low tone.



475. Sammy Jay Calls on Reddy Fox with an Idea.
"Pooh!" I have never really tried," said Reddy.



476. Chatterer Red Squirrel Falls Into the Trap.
Chatterer hid in a hole between two big stones.



477. Drummer the Woodpecker Begs Pardon.
"That may be so and it may not be so," retorted Drummer.

tree, and for Drummer to let such a chance to drum go by meant that he was doing some very hard thinking. Mrs. Drummer stuck her head out of the door and looked at him anxiously.

“Are you sick?” she asked.

Drummer shook his red-capped head. “No, my dear, I’m not sick,” he said.

“Well, then, what is the matter with you?” persisted Mrs. Drummer.

“I’m thinking,” replied Drummer.

“Don’t do it any more, then,” advised Mrs Drummer tartly, “if it is going to make you so absent-minded.”

Drummer smiled. “I was thinking that we owe Mistah Mocker and Sammy Jay an apology, especially Sammy Jay. He hadn’t done a thing and yet we called him a thief and helped to drive him out of the old orchard,” said he.

“The only reason he didn’t steal our eggs was because Chatterer the Red Squirrel found them first,” sputtered Mrs. Drummer, who never could see anything good in Sammy Jay.

“That may be so, and it may not be so,” retorted Drummer, “I wouldn’t want to leave eggs in Sammy’s way, but he didn’t take those we lost and we told everybody that he did. And he did help us to punish Chatterer. I’m going this very minute to beg his pardon.”

So without waiting to hear what more Mrs. Drummer might have to say away he flew to the Green Forest to look for Sammy Jay. He found him with Mistah Mocker the Mockingbird, laughing in great glee over the way Chatterer had walked into the trap they had set for him and had shown the people of the old orchard who the real thief was who had made so much trouble for Drummer. Now when Drummer the Woodpecker has anything to do, he does it without wasting any time about it. He flew right over to where Sammy and Mistah Mocker were sitting.

“I’ve come to beg your pardon, Sammy Jay, and yours, too, Mistah Mocker, for all the trouble I’ve gotten you into,” said he without waiting to catch his breath, “and to say that hereafter no one will bother you when you come to the old orchard, unless, Sammy Jay,” —here Drummer looked at him slyly, —unless you are caught at your old tricks.”

Sammy grinned. “No danger of that after seeing what you folks did to Chatterer,” he replied. “He didn’t get home until the next morning, and he’s so stiff and lame and sore that he hasn’t put his nose outside his house since. I don’t believe he’ll want to see another egg as long as he lives. Listen!” Sammy flew over to a hollow chestnut tree, and just outside a little round doorway he screamed: “Eggs! eggs! Who stole the eggs?”

At once arose such a scolding and such a calling of bad names that Mistah Mocker said that no gentleman could listen to it, and he for one was going back to the old orchard.

“And still I don’t believe he is really sorry because he stole, but only because he was found out,” said Drummer thoughtfully, as he and Mistah Mocker flew back to the old orchard.

“Ah think yo’ are exactly right in your opinion, Brer Woodpecker,” said Mistah Mocker. “Ah think yo’ are exactly right. Ah fears Brer Chatterer has a bad heart. Ah do indeed. But still,” he added, “Ah cert’nly am right glad Brer Fox didn’t catch him.”

STORY 478. August 25, 1913

News From the Dear Old Briar Patch

Jenny Wren is a busybody. Yes, sir, she certainly is a busybody. If there is anything goes on in her neighborhood that she doesn’t know about it isn’t because she doesn’t try to find out. She is so small and spry that it is hard to keep track of her, and she pops out at the most unexpected times and places. Then before you can say a word she is gone.

And in all the Old Orchard or on the Green Meadows there is not to be found another tongue so busy as that of Jenny Wren. It is sharp sometimes, but when she wants it to be so there is none smoother. You see she is a great gossip, is Jenny Wren, a great gossip. But if you get on the right side of Jenny Wren and ask her to keep a secret, she’ll do it. No one knows how to keep a secret better than she does.

Now, how it happened nobody knows, but it did happen that when Peter Rabbit came home to the dear old briar patch, bringing Mrs. Peter with him, Jenny Wren didn’t hear about it. Probably it was because the new home which she had just completed was so carefully hidden that the messengers sent by Peter to invite all his friends³⁹ to call didn’t find it, and afterward she was so busy with household affairs that she didn’t have time to gossip. Anyway, Peter had been back some time before Jenny Wren knew it. She was quite upset to think that she was the last to hear the news, but she consoled herself with the thought that she had been attending strictly to her duties, and, now that her children were able to look out for themselves, she could make up for lost time.

Just as soon as she could get away, she started for the old briar patch. She wanted to hear all about Peter’s adventures in the Old Pasture and to meet Mrs. Peter. But, like a great many other busybodies, she wanted to find out all she could about Peter’s affairs, and she thought that the surest way to do it was not to let Peter know that she was about until she had a chance to use her sharp little eyes all she wanted to. So when she reached the old briar patch she didn’t make a sound. It didn’t take her long to find Peter. He was sitting under one of his favorite bramble bushes smiling to himself. He smiled and smiled until Jenny Wren had to bite her tongue to keep from asking what was pleasing him so.

“He looks tickled almost to death over something, but very likely if I should ask him what it is he wouldn’t tell me,” thought Jenny Wren. “I guess I’ll look around a bit first. I wonder where Mrs. Peter is?”

39 STORY 461, 1913.

So, leaving Peter to smile to his heart's content, she went peeking and peering through the old briar patch. Of course, it wasn't a nice thing to do, not a bit nice. But Jenny Wren didn't stop to think of that. By and by she saw something that made her flutter all over with excitement. She looked and looked until she could sit still no longer. Then she hurried back to where Peter was sitting. He was still smiling.

"O, Peter Rabbit, it's perfectly lovely!" she cried.

Peter looked up quickly, and a worried look chased the smile away. "Hello, Jenny Wren! Where did you come from? haven't seen you since I got back," said he.

"I've been so busy that I haven't had time to call before," replied Jenny. "I know what you've been smiling about, Peter, and it's perfectly splendid. Has everybody heard the news?"

"No," said Peter. "Nobody knows it but you, and I don't want anybody else to know it just yet. Will you keep it a secret, Jenny Wren?"

Now, Jenny was just bursting with desire to spread the news, but Peter looked so anxious that finally she promised that she would keep it to herself, and she really meant to. But though Peter looked greatly relieved as he watched her start for home, he didn't smile as he did before. "I wish her tongue didn't wag so much," said he.

(Mrs. Peter Rabbit, Chapter 28, "News from the Old Briar-Patch")

STORY 479. August 26, 1913

Jimmy Skunk Pays a Visit to Peter Rabbit

On her way home from the old briar patch Jenny Wren stopped to rest in a bush beside the Crooked Little Path that comes down the hill, when who should come along but Jimmy Skunk. Now, just as usual, Jenny Wren was fidgeting and fussing about, and Jimmy Skunk grinned as he watched her.

"Hello, Jenny Wren!" said he, "what are you doing here?"

"I'm resting on my way home from the old briar patch, if you must know, Jimmy Skunk!" replied Jenny Wren, changing her position half a dozen times while she was speaking.

"Ho, ho, ho!" laughed Jimmy Skunk. "Do you call that resting? That's a joke, Jenny Wren. Resting! Why, you couldn't sit still and rest if you tried."

"I could so! I'm resting right now, so there, Jimmy Skunk!" protested Jenny Wren in a very indignant tone of voice, and hopped all over the little bush while she was speaking. "I guess if you knew what I know you'd be excited, too."

"Well, I guess the quickest way for me to know is for you to tell me," replied Jimmy. "I'm just aching to be excited."

Jimmy grinned, for you know Jimmy Skunk never does get excited and never hurries no matter what happens.

“You’ll have to keep right on aching then,” replied Jenny Wren, with a saucy flirt of her funny little tail. “There’s great news in the old briar patch, and I’m the only one that knows it, but I’ve promised not to tell.”

Jimmy pricked up his ears, “News in the old briar patch must have something to do with Peter Rabbit,” said he. “What has Peter done now?”

“I’ll never tell! I’ll never tell!” cried Jenny Wren, growing so excited that it seemed to Jimmy as if there was danger that she would turn herself inside out. “I promised not to and I never will!” Then for fear that she would in spite of herself she flew on her way home.

Jimmy watched her out of sight with a puzzled frown. “If I didn’t know that she gets so terribly excited over nothing I’d think that there really was some news in the old briar patch,” he muttered to himself. “Anyway, I haven’t anything better to do, so I believe I’ll drop around that way and make Peter Rabbit a call.”

He found Peter in a sweet clover patch just outside the old briar patch, and it struck Jimmy that Peter looked uncommonly happy. He said as much.

“I am,” replied Peter before he thought. Then he added hastily: “You see. I’ve been uncommonly happy ever since I returned with Mrs. Peter from the Old Pasture.”

“But I hear there’s great news over here in the old briar patch,” persisted Jimmy Skunk. “What is it, Peter?”

Peter pretended to be very much surprised. “Great news!” he repeated “Great news! Why, what news can there be over here? Who told you that?”

“A little bird told me,” replied Jimmy, slyly.

“It must have been Jenny Wren!” said Peter once more speaking before he thought.

“Then there is news over here!” cried Jimmy, triumphantly. “What is it, Peter?”

But Peter shook his head as if he hadn’t the slightest idea and couldn’t imagine. Jimmy coaxed and teased but all in vain, and finally he started for home no wiser than before.

“Just the same, I believe that Jenny Wren told the truth and that there is news over in the old briar patch” he muttered to himself. “Something has happened over there and Peter won’t tell. I wonder what it can be.”

(*Mrs. Peter Rabbit*, Chapter 29, “Jimmy Skunk Visits Peter Rabbit.”)

STORY 480. August 27, 1913

Reddy Fox Gets News Peter is Trying to Hide

Of course Jenny Wren didn’t mean to tell the secret of the old briar patch, because she had promised Peter Rabbit that she wouldn’t. But she didn’t see any harm in telling every one she met that there was a secret there, at least that there was great news there, and so, because Jenny Wren is a great gossip, it wasn’t long before all the little people

on the Green Meadows and in the Green Forest and around the Smiling Pool had heard it and were wondering what the news could be.

Jimmy Skunk was the first to visit the old briar patch and try to find out from Peter Rabbit what Jenny Wren meant, but Peter managed to keep his secret and Jimmy went back home no wiser than before. After Jimmy came a whole string of visitors to the old briar patch. One would hardly have left before another would appear. Each one tried to act as if he had just happened around that way and didn't want to pass Peter's home without making a call, but each one asked so many questions that Peter knew that what had really brought them there was the desire to find out what the news in the old briar patch could be. But Peter was too smart for them and they all went away no wiser than they came, that is, all but one, and that one was Reddy Fox.

There isn't much going on in the Green Forest or on the Green Meadows that Reddy doesn't know about. He is sly, is Reddy Fox, and his eyes are sharp and his ears are keen. Of course he heard the foolish gossip of Jenny Wren and he pricked up his ears.

"So there's news down in the old briar patch, is there? A secret that Jenny Wren won't tell? I think I'll trot down there and make Peter a call. Of course he'll be glad to see me." Reddy grinned wickedly as he said this to himself, for he knew that there was no one for whom Peter Rabbit had less love unless it was old Granny Fox.

So Reddy trotted down to the old briar patch. Peter saw him coming and scowled. for he guessed right away what Reddy was coming for, and he made ready to answer all of Reddy's questions and still tell nothing, as he had with all the others who had called.

But Reddy asked no questions. He didn't once mention the fact that he had heard that there was news in the old briar patch. He didn't once speak of Jenny Wren. He just talked about the weather and the Old Pasture where Peter had made such a long visit, and all the time was as pleasant and polite as if he and Peter were the dearest of friends.

But while he was talking Reddy was using those sharp eyes and those keen ears of his the best that he knew how. But the old briar patch was very thick and he could see only a little way into it, and out of it came no sound to hint of a secret there. Then Reddy began to walk around the old briar patch in quite the most matter-of-fact way, but as he walked that wonderful nose of his was testing every little breath of air that came out of the old briar patch. At last he reached a certain place where a little stronger breath of air tickled his nose. He stopped for a few minutes and slowly a smile grew and grew. Then without saying a word he turned and trotted back toward the Green Forest.

Peter Rabbit watched him go. Then he joined Mrs. Rabbit in the heart of the old briar patch. "My dear," he said with a sigh that was almost a sob, "Reddy Fox has found out our secret."

"Never mind," said little Mrs. Peter brightly, "it would have to be found out soon anyway."

And trotting up the Lone Little Path Reddy Fox was grinning broadly. "It is news,"

he said. "Jenny Wren was right, it is news! But I don't believe anybody else knows it yet and I hope they won't find out right away, least of all Old Man Coyote. What a wonderful thing a good nose is. It tells me what my eyes cannot see nor my ears hear."

(*Mrs. Peter Rabbit*, Chapter 30, "Reddy Fox Learns the Secret.")

STORY 481. August 28, 1913

Blacky the Crow has Very Sharp Eyes

Blacky is a rascal!
Blacky is a thief!
Of all the trouble makers
Blacky is the chief.

That is what a lot of people say about Blacky the Crow. Of course it is true that Blacky does get into a lot of mischief, but if people really knew him they would find that he isn't as black as he looks. In fact Blacky the Crow does a whole lot of good in his own peculiar way, but people are always looking for him to do bad things, and you know you most always see what you expect to see. So the good Blacky does isn't seen, while the bad is, and so he has grown to have a very bad reputation.

But this doesn't worry Blacky the Crow. No, sir, it doesn't worry him a bit. You see he has grown used to it. And then he is so smart that he is never afraid of being caught when he does do wrong things. No one has sharper eyes than Blacky, and no one knows better how to use them. And so when he is about there is very little going on in the Green Forest or on the Green Meadows that he misses.

The day after Reddy Fox visited the old briar patch and with his wonderful nose found out Peter Rabbit's secret, Blacky just happened to fly over the old briar patch on his way to Farmer Brown's cornfield. Now being over the old briar patch he could look right down into it and see all through it. Just as he reached it he remembered having heard Sammy Jay say something about gossip little Jenny Wren's having said that there was great news in the old briar patch. He hadn't thought much about it at the time, but now that he was right here, he might as well have a look for himself and see if there was any truth in it.

So Blacky the Crow flew a little lower and his sharp eyes looked this way and that way through all the bramble bushes of the old briar patch. He saw Peter Rabbit right away and winked at him. He thought Peter looked worried and anxious.

"Peter must have something on his mind," thought Blacky. "I wonder where Mrs. Peter is."

Just then he caught sight of her under the thickest growing sweet briar rose. He had opened his mouth to shout, "Hello, Mrs. Peter," when he saw something that surprised him so that he didn't speak at all. He almost forgot to flap his wings to keep himself in the air. He hovered right where he was for a few minutes looking down through the brambles, and then with a hoarse chuckle he started for the Smiling Pool, forgetting all

about Farmer Brown's cornfield.

"Caw, caw, caw!" he shrieked, "Peter Rabbit's got a family! Peter Rabbit's got a family!"

Reddy Fox heard him and ground his teeth. "Now Old Man Coyote will know and will try to catch those young rabbits, when they ought to be mine, because I found out about them first," he grumbled.

Jimmy Skunk heard Blacky and grinned broadly. "So that's the great news Jenny Wren found out!" said he. "I hope Peter will take better care of his babies than he ever has of himself. I must call at once."

Redtail the Hawk heard and he smiled too, but it wasn't a kindly smile like Jimmy Skunk's. "I think young Rabbit will taste very good for a change," said he.

(*Mrs. Peter Rabbit*, Chapter 31, "Blacky the Crow has Sharp Eyes.")

STORY 482. August 29, 1913

Peter Rabbit's Four Babies in their Nursery

The news was out at last, thanks to Blacky the Crow. Peter Rabbit had a family! Yes, sir, Peter Rabbit had a family! Right away the old briar patch became the most interesting place on the Green Meadows to all the little people who lived there and in the near-by Green Forest. Of course all of Peter's friends called as soon as ever they could. They found Peter looking very proud, and very important, and very happy. Mrs. Peter looked just as proud and just as happy, but she also looked very anxious. You see, while she was very glad to have so many friends call, there were other visitors. That is, they were not exactly callers, but they hung around the outside of the old briar patch and they seemed quite as much interested as the friends who really called. Indeed, they seemed even more interested.

Who were they? Why, Reddy Fox was one. Then there was Old Man Coyote and Redtail the Hawk and Digger the Badger and just at dusk Hooty the Owl. They all seemed very much interested indeed, but every time little Mrs. Peter saw them she shivered. You see, she couldn't help thinking that there was a dreadful hungry look in their eyes, and if the truth is to be told probably there was.

But happy-go-lucky Peter Rabbit didn't let this worry him. Hadn't he grown up from a teeny-weeny baby and been smart enough to escape all these dangers which worried Mrs. Peter so? And if he could do it of course his own babies could do it, with him to teach them and show them how! Besides, they were too little to go outside of the old briar patch now. Indeed, they were too little to go outside their nursery, which was in a clump of sweet briar roses in the very middle of the old briar patch, and Peter felt that there they were perfectly safe.

"It isn't time to worry, yet," said Peter to little Mrs. Peter as he saw the fright in her eyes as the shadow of Redtail passed over them. "I don't believe in borrowing trouble. Time enough when there is something to worry about, and that won't be until

these little scallawags of ours are big enough to run around and get into mischief. Did you ever see such beautiful babies in all your life?"

For a minute the worried look left little Mrs. Peter and she gazed at the four little helpless babies fondly. "No," she replied softly, "I never did. Oh, Peter, they are they are perfectly lovely! This one is the perfect image of you and I'm going to call him Little Pete. And don't you think his brother looks like his grandfather? I think we'll call him Little Jed."

Peter coughed behind his hand as if something had stuck in his throat. He had no love for Little Jed's grandfather, Old Jed Thumper, the big gray old Rabbit who had tried so hard to drive him from the Old Pasture, but he didn't say anything. If Mrs. Peter wanted to name this one Little Jed why he wouldn't say a word. Aloud he said:

"I think, my dear, that this one looks just as you must have looked when you were very little, and so we'll call her Fuzzy." (You know when Peter first met Mrs Peter, her name was Miss Fuzzytail). "And her sister we'll call Wuzzy," continued Peter. "Was ever there such a splendid nursery for baby Rabbits?"

"I don't believe there ever was, Peter. It's better than my old nursery in the Old Pasture," replied Little Mrs. Peter as with a sigh of perfect happiness she stretched out beside her four babies.

And Peter softly tiptoed away to the nearest sweet clover patch with his heart almost bursting with pride.

(*Mrs. Peter Rabbit*, Chapter 32, "Peter Rabbit's Nursery.")

STORY 483. August 30, 1913.

Peter Rabbit Comes Home Just in Time

Worrying is foolishness,
It's not a bit of use;
It only makes one miserable,
For which there's no excuse.

Peter Rabbit was very fond of saying this. He believed it, too, for, as every one knows, Peter is one of the most happy-go-lucky of all the little meadow and forest people. So he left all the worrying about their babies in the nursery in the old briarpatch to Mrs. Peter, who did enough for two. He used to laugh at her for her fears and tease her to go with him to hunt for sweet clover and other goodies just as she used to do before there were any babies, saying that no harm could possibly come to them in their nursery in the sweet briar clump in the very middle of the old briar patch.

But little Mrs. Peter was too good a mother to go very far from her babies, and if she did go, she was so anxious all the time that she couldn't eat and was always sure that something dreadful was happening at home, so that after a while Peter stopped asking her to go and went alone. Of course little Mrs. Peter had to eat, so sometimes when Peter was at home she would slip out hurriedly to the nearest sweet clover patch

Illustrations. August 25, 1913 to August 30, 1913.



478. News from the Dear Old Briar Patch
“No,” said Peter, “Nobody knows it but you.”



479. Jimmy Skunk Pays a Visit to Peter Rabbit
“A little bird told me,” replied Jimmy, slyly.



480. Reddy Fox Gets News Peter is Trying to Hide
Reddy began to walk around the Old Briar Patch



481. Blacky the Crow has Very Sharp Eyes
Blacky the Crow visits Peter Rabbit.



482. Peter Rabbit's Four Babies in their Nursery
If Mrs. Peter wanted to name this one “Little Jed,” why, he wouldn't say a word.



483. Peter Rabbit Comes Home Just in Time
The next instant he saw something that for a moment made his heart stop beating.

while Peter took care of the babies. She was seldom gone long and usually Peter took a nap close by the nursery.

One morning little Mrs. Peter had left Peter to keep watch while she got her breakfast. Peter didn't feel like a nap that morning and got to thinking about a new path he was planning to cut in the upper end of the old briar patch.

"It's all foolishness my staying here," thought Peter. "I believe I'll just hop over and have a look at that place where I want to cut the new path. I won't be gone but a few minutes."

So he looked at the four babies to make sure that they were all right and away he went, lipperty-lipperty-lip. He was gone longer than he meant to be, he was so interested in planning that new path. Suddenly he remembered the four helpless babies at home in, the nursery.

"My goodness, what will Mrs. Peter say if she gets home first and finds me away?" said he, and home he started as fast as he could go. When he got in sight of the nursery Mrs Peter wasn't to be seen and he gave a sigh of relief. The next instant he saw something that for a minute made his heart stop beating! Yes, sir, for one dreadful minute Peter felt as if the world was coming to an end! There right in the nursery Peter had felt was so safe, his eyes sparkling with hungry eagerness as he bent his head over the four helpless babies was Mr. Blacksnake!

With great bounds Peter sprang forward. Mr Blacksnake heard him coming a drew back a little, hissing angrily. He coiled himself up to fight, for he had no intention of giving up such a splendid breakfast as those baby rabbits would make. He could remember when Peter used to be afraid of him and half suspected that he could frighten Peter now. But that was where he was mistaken. Peter was big and strong now and had no fear of Mr. Blacksnake. Besides, he was fighting for his babies, the dearest babies in the world. Like a flash he leaped over Mr. Blacksnake and struck with his powerful hind legs. They hurt Mr. Blacksnake. The claws tore his skin and he wriggled all over with pain. But he struck back like a flash, only to get a mouthful of hair without hurting Peter in the least.

Back and forth leaped Peter, kicking with all his might. It was more than Mr. Blacksnake could stand. When Peter stopped for breath, Mr. Blacksnake dodged under a bramble bush and started to crawl away as fast as he could. Somehow he didn't have any appetite for baby rabbits any longer. All he thought about was getting away before he should receive another of those terrible kicks. Peter followed him clear to the edge of the old briar patch. When he was sure that Mr. Blacksnake had really gone he hurried back to the nursery.

"It's lucky I came back when I did," he panted. "I forgot all about the Snake family when I said this nursery was perfectly safe."

Play Days in the Old Briar Patch

It's good to run; it's good to jump;
To hide and seek each sunny day;
It's good for all, both big and small,
To race and hop and skip and play.

Never could the dear old briar patch remember such merry days. You see, the four babies of Peter Rabbit and little Mrs. Peter were just as full of fun and mischief as four healthy, happy babies could be. It wasn't any time at all before the nursery in the sweet briar patch clump in the middle of the old briar patch wasn't big enough for them and in spite of all timid little Mrs. Peter could do they would run outside to play.

"Pooh!" Peter would say, when Mrs. Peter was worrying and fretting. "Of course they are perfectly safe so long as they don't go outside of the old briar patch. They have got to have room to stretch their legs, and no harm is going to come to them here with you and me to watch and see that they don't go too far away from home."

Peter had never told Mrs. Peter how he had found Mr. Blacksnake in the nursery, but ever since then he had never gone very far away himself. To tell the truth, Peter was a little anxious himself now, especially since Fuzzy and Wuzzy and their two brothers, Little Pete and Little Jed, had begun to play about. He didn't really think that Mr. Blacksnake would venture back, but he might, and Peter wouldn't take any chances. So very often when Mrs. Peter thought that he had gone off to the Green Forest or over to the Smiling Pool, Peter would be sitting where he could keep watch.

Such games of hide and seek as those four little Rabbits did have! You know the old briar patch is a wonderful place, full of the nicest hiding places and with so many little paths crossing and recrossing in every direction. There never was a nicer playground. The Merry Little Breezes of Old Mother West Wind came there every day for a frolic, and rumbled up the soft hair and tickled the noses of Fuzzy and Wuzzy and their brothers, and told them wonderful tales of the Green Meadows and the Smiling Pool. Then Little Pete and Little Jed would sit up very straight and try to make themselves very tall and would boast that they were going to see all these wonderful things, while Fuzzy and Wuzzy crouch down, under a friendly bramble and say that they never, never would dare to leave the dear old briar patch.

Then Little Pete and Little Jed would cry "Fraidy! Fraidy!" and kick up their heels in the funniest way, while their two little sisters would chase them 'round and 'round and in and out along the little paths until they were all out of breath. Sometimes one would hide and pretend to be lost and then the others would hunt and hunt. Sometimes they would see who could jump the highest and sometimes who could jump the farthest.

O, those were happy days in the dear old briar patch, with nothing to do but eat and sleep and play! And the hearts of Peter Rabbit and Mrs. Peter swelled with joy and pride as they watched. And there were others who looked on and smiled, though their

smiles were not always pleasant to see. There was Redtail the Hawk, looking down from high in the sky. They'll soon be big enough to want to leave the old briar patch and then—" Instead of finishing, Redtail would snap his bill hungrily. And there were Reddy Fox and Granny Fox! They knew just how fast those four babies were growing, and as day after day they lay hidden in the grass outside the briar patch they could hear what was going on inside and they would smile, too, with very much the same thoughts as those of Redtail the Hawk.

STORY 485. September 2, 1913

Peter Rabbit Heeds Sammy Jay's Warning

Of course, Sammy Jay often visited the old briar patch. Wherever anything is going on there you will find Sammy Jay. Sammy was very much interested in Peter Rabbit's family. He had had so much fun watching Johnny Chuck and his babies up in the Old Orchard⁴⁰ that as soon as he heard that Peter Rabbit had a family he hurried down there right away, and after that he managed to take in the old briar patch every day, as he made his rounds of the Green Forest and the Green Meadows to find out all that was going on. "

"It seems to me that it is about time you began to teach those little scamps that life isn't all play, Peter Rabbit," said he one day as he watched them playing hide and seek.

Peter looked up and scowled. "I don't need your advice, Sammy Jay," he replied crossly, for Peter and Sammy are not the very best of friends. "I guess that I know better than you do what a rabbit has to learn."

Sammy laughed. "Of course, you know best, Peter. Of course, you know best, he replied. "I was just thinking of what Reddy Fox told me this morning.

"What was that?" demanded Peter sharply.

"O," said Sammy, hiding a smile, "he said that you had the most beautiful babies he had seen for a long time, and he was very glad to see that they were not learning much.

"Why, they don't even know enough to follow their mother's tail yet," said he; "and I think that one of these days Granny and I will have a fine Rabbit dinner."

Peter grew quite pale and looked hastily to see if his babies were safe as of course, they were. Then he pretended to Sammy that he didn't believe a word of what Sammy had said. Finally Sammy flew away to the Green Forest chuckling all the way. "Peter doesn't like me and is sure I do nothing but mischief," he thought, "but that is where he is mistaken. If he's wise, he'll get busy right away and put those four scalawags of his in school. Johnny Chuck didn't waste any time in teaching his babies⁴¹, and Peter Rabbit better get busy pretty soon, for his babies have a lot more to learn than the little Chucks had."

40 STORY 363, 1913.

41 STORY 365, 1913.

Now, all the time Sammy was thinking these things Peter was doing some hard thinking, too. In spite of the scornful way in which he had received Sammy Jay's advice, Peter had known in his heart that Sammy was right. And, though he didn't believe what Sammy had said about Reddy Fox, it might be true. Reddy certainly was hanging around the old briar patch a great deal. Peter looked at the four babies chasing each other in a game of tag, and at the thought of anything happening to one of them he shivered. Then right then and there he made up his mind that it was high time that they were taught some very important lessons, and he straightaway hunted up Mrs Peter to talk the matter over with her.

As soon as Mrs. Peter heard what Sammy Jay had said that Reddy Fox had said she became terribly anxious and when Peter proposed that they start a school—right away in the old briar patch—she nodded her head vigorously. So it was agreed that Fuzzy and Wuzzy and Little Pete and little Jed should have their first lessons that very day.

STORY 486. September 3, 1913

The School in the Old Briar Patch

Of all the lessons in life's school
For Rabbits, Squirrels, you and me,
Obedience is taught us first,
And most important seems to be.

Peter Rabbit learned that when he was very young. It hadn't seemed so important then, but after two or three very narrow escapes from dangers which might have cost him his life, and all because he hadn't obeyed, he had begun to realize that to obey promptly is the first and most important lesson any one can learn. The older he had grown the more he had realized this. So now that he had made up his mind that it was high time for his four babies to begin to go to school obedience was the lesson he meant that they should learn first of all.

Now, usually the teaching of baby Rabbits is left almost wholly to the mother. But Peter was too fond of little Mrs. Peter to leave all the work for her. Besides, she had lived nearly all her life in the Old Pasture and there were some dangers on the Green Meadows and in the Green Forest that she didn't know about as well as he, so he made up his mind that he would do his share. Little Mrs. Peter was only too glad to have his help, you may be sure, and so it was agreed that she would teach Fuzzy and Wuzzy, while Peter would look after Little Pete and Little Jed. And this is how it happened that when Sammy Jay next visited the old briar patch he found that it had been turned into a school Instead of just a playground.

He found Peter giving Little Pete and Little Jed a lesson. Sammy didn't know what the lesson was about, but he soon found out.

"Now you sit just where you are and don't move until I come back," said Peter. "Remember, now, don't move so much as one of your ears! Don't forget!"

Then Peter hopped off out of sight. The two little bunnies sat just as he had left them for what seemed to them a very long time. They didn't know where Peter had gone or what he had gone for. They could see their two little sisters eating some tender young clover their mother had brought them and they wanted some, too. If they didn't get over there soon it would all be gone. It seemed to them that never, never had they wanted anything so in all their short lives, and probably they never had.

At last Little Pete could stand it no longer. You see, Little Pete was very much like his father. He not only looked like him, but he was just the same happy-go-lucky kind.

"I don't see any sense in sitting here so long," he whispered to his brother. "Something must have happened to father or else he's forgotten all about us. I'm going to get some of that clover."

"Better not!" said Little Jed. "You know we are not to move so much as one of our ears."

Little Pete sighed, but he sat perfectly still a few minutes longer. Then, as he saw that there were only two or three clover leaves left, his appetite got the best of him and he started for the place where his two little sisters were having such a feast. He hadn't taken two tiny jumps before an angry thump on the ground right behind him made him stop and turn his head. There was his father, Peter Rabbit, who had stolen back very softly and had been watching all the time. Little Pete hung his head. And then when he saw Peter give Little Jed a nice big bundle of sweet clover, two big tears ran down his cheeks, for he knew that as a punishment he was to have none, and it did look, O, so good!

"I—I wish I'd minded," sobbed Little Pete. And then he wondered what Sammy Jay was laughing at as he flew away to the Green Forest.

STORY 487. September 4, 1913

Little Peter Learns Still Another Lesson

There are two kinds of people in this world—the kind who do as they are told and ask no questions, and the kind who always ask why. Peter Rabbit belonged to the why kind. Yes, sir, Peter belonged to the why kind. He doesn't now, because he has lived long enough to know better, but when he was young, he got into all kinds of trouble just because he wouldn't mind until he had found out or tried to find out why he had been told to do or not to do a certain thing. And now Little Pete was just like him. He made Peter more trouble and worry than all three of the others together. Little Jed, Fuzzy and Wuzzy would do as they were told and ask no questions, but Little Pete was very much inclined to ask questions first and mind when perhaps it was too late.

Peter was very stern as he talked to Little Pete. He told him that someday something dreadful would surely happen to Little Pete if he persisted in being so headstrong and willful. Little Pete hung his head and said he was sorry he had been bad and that the next time he would mind just as soon as he was spoken to. And he really meant it. Yes, indeed, he really meant to show Peter that no one could mind better than

he.

But, alas and alack! he was such a happy-go-lucky little fellow that he found it much easier, oh, so much easier, to forget than to remember. It wasn't five minutes after he had made this promise that an old friend of Peter's came buzzing into the old briar patch. It was Bumble the Bee, hoping to find a late sweet briar rose. Now, Bumble the Bee is a crusty old fellow⁴², who believes that everyone should attend strictly to his own affairs, and that if everyone did this it would save a lot of trouble in this world. He does it himself and never meddles with the business of other folks. But if others meddle with him, Bumble will listen to no excuses. He acts promptly, for he believes that experience is the best teacher, and that those who have had experience with him once will not want it twice.

Now Bumble and Peter are the best of friends and have been ever since Peter was a little fellow. He saw Bumble as soon as he came buzzing into the old briar patch and he told his four little bunnies that this was an old friend, whom they must never, never bother, because if they did they would surely be sorry.

Now, Little Pete was just as full of curiosity as his father ever was, and Bumble the Bee interested him so much that he just followed him around trying to find out what Bumble was about. By and by Bumble came buzzing down close to the ground, right in front of Little Pete. He was such a funny looking fellow in his black and yellow coat, and he made such a tremendous fuss over doing I nothing, as it seemed to the little Rabbit, that Little Pete began to laugh at him.

"What are you laughing at?" demanded Bumble crossly.

"At you," replied Little Pete, laughing all the harder. "You seem to think you are so important when you are really such a little thing. Why, I am ever and ever so many times bigger than you! Aren't you afraid of me?"

"No," replied Bumble crossly. "You are nothing but a foolish little Rabbit, I who will learn something some day if you live long enough."

"Little, am I?" cried Little Pete, trying very hard to make himself look big and important. "Little, am I? Take that!"

As he spoke, Little Pete reached out and struck Bumble with one of his little paws. What happened then happened so quickly that Little Pete didn't know what did happen. All he knew was that he felt a sudden sharp pain right in the tip of his wobbly little nose, such a sharp pain that he cried right out. It brought Peter Rabbit in a hurry. But when Peter saw what the trouble was he just laughed. Yes, sir, Peter laughed.

42 Burgess repeated this counter-factual characterization from the previous year (STORY 40, 1912), suggesting that at this point in the feature he was willing to sacrifice natural history accuracy for story and character.

“Didn’t I tell you not to meddle with Bumble the Bee and that if you did you surely would be sorry,” he asked. “This is what comes of not minding. Now, go put some mud on your nose and you’ll feel better.”

“I’ll never, never meddle with other people again, if they are smaller than me,” sobbed Little Pete, as he held some wet mud on his swollen and aching nose.

STORY 488. September 5, 1913

The Four Little Bunnies Learn How to “Freeze”

The first great lesson which little meadow and forest people, as well as little boys and girls, have to learn is to mind. Some learn it right away, while others, like Little Pete, Peter Rabbit’s favorite baby, learn only by bitter experience. Little Pete had already had to go hungry because he didn’t mind, and now his wobbly nose was swollen and dreadfully sore because he had persisted in bothering Bumble the Bee after he had been told not to. Of course, his tender-hearted little sisters, Fuzzy and Wuzzy, were sorry for him and tried to comfort him; but his brother, Little Jed, who had minded, said that it served him just right. Of course, Little Pete didn’t like that, but down deep in his heart he knew that it was true, and he made up his mind that never, never would he disobey again.

Now the second great lesson that little meadow and forest people have to learn grows out of the first and is called “freezing.” Don’t shiver and shake at the thought, for it isn’t that kind of freezing at all. O, my, no. It is simply sitting or standing perfectly still, just as still as if an icy breath from fierce Brother North Wind had frozen you so stiff that you couldn’t move if you tried. Knowing just how and when to do this is the most important lesson that the little meadow and forest people have to learn after minding, and those who learn it best live the longest.

Now Peter Rabbit knows all about “freezing.” Many a time he has sat almost under Hooty the Owl and Hooty couldn’t see him because he didn’t move so much as his nose. So Peter was very particular that his four babies should be taught just how to “freeze,” because until they did learn it wouldn’t be safe for them to even peep outside of the dear old briar patch. Sammy Jay was on hand to watch. Sammy knows all about freezing, though he seldom has to practice it himself.

“Now,” said Peter, “you children go play, but all the time you are playing keep your ears open, and the very second you hear your mother or me thump like this”—Peter struck the ground a quick, sharp blow with his hind feet—“stop right where you are and don’t move the teeniest, weeniest bit until you hear two thumps, which will mean that danger is past.”

Then Peter and Mrs. Peter went off out of sight and the four little bunnies started the merriest kind of a game of tag. They had almost forgotten that they were at school, when suddenly there was a sharp thump from way over in the far corner of the old briar patch. Instantly each little bunny stopped as if really and truly frozen. They waited and waited. A fly crawled over the sore nose of Little Pete. It seemed as if he just had to

brush it off, but he didn't. By and by he heard two thumps, and it seemed to him that he never before had heard such a welcome sound.

"Good bunny!" said Sammy Jay, nodding his head approvingly.

Then the game began again, until there was another thump, when they all froze as before. So they kept it up all the morning. It was fun, and yet it was hard work, too. Once Fuzzy sneezed, and Mrs. Peter, who happened to be close by, promptly punished her by knocking her over with a kick from one of her long hind legs. Once little Jed was in such an uncomfortable position that it seemed to him he couldn't possibly keep still a second longer, but he did.

Finally Peter Rabbit made up his mind that they had had lessons enough for one day, and he was just going to say so when the imp of mischief prompted Sammy Jay to scream the way he always does when Reddy Fox is around. Instantly Peter gave the signal thump and the four little bunnies "froze" just where they were. Now, of course, Peter didn't know that Sammy was fooling, and so he didn't dare give the signal that danger was past. The four little bunnies sat and sat and Peter and Mrs Peter sat and sat, until they all ached from sitting so long. Finally Sammy Jay could keep in no longer. He just had to laugh at the success of his joke. Peter looked up angrily as he gave the signal that told the tired little bunnies they might move again.

STORY 489. September 6, 1913

Learning How to Follow Mammy's Tail

Twinkle, twinkle, little tail
All long the briar trail,
In the darkness shining white
To guide a little rabbit right.

Following mammy's tail was a new game which little Mrs. Peter played with Fuzzy and Wuzzy and their two brothers every night at shadow time. She called it a game, but really it was a lesson, a very important lesson, and one which every little bunny has to learn. At least every little bunny ought to learn it. It was great fun. And it always came at just the nicest time of day, that in, the time of day that rabbits think is nicest.

Little Mrs. Peter would wait until Old Mother West Wind had gathered her children, the Merry Little Breezes, into her big bag and started for the Purple Hills, behind which jolly, round, red Mr. Sun was pulling his nightcap on. Then she would call the four little bunnies and together they would steal to where they could peep out of the old briar patch away across the Green Meadows toward the Old Pasture, which used to be Mrs. Peter's home, and beyond that to the Purple Hills.

While they waited, she would tell them stories about the Old Pasture and the exciting time she had had when Reddy and Old Granny Fox came up there to live for a while⁴³. Then the black shadows would come creeping down from the Purple Hills,

43 STORY 188, 1912.

Illustrations. September 1 to September 6, 1913.



484. Play Days in the Old Briar Patch

O, those were the happy days in the Old Briar Patch.



485. Peter Rabbit Heeds Sammy Jay's Warning

"I think that one of these days Granny and I will have a fine rabbit dinner."



486. The School in the Old Briar Patch

"I don't see any sense in sitting here so long," he whispered to his brother.



487. Little Peter Learns Still Another Lesson

"What are you laughing at?" demanded Bumble, crossly.



488. Little Peter Learns Still Another Lesson

Many a time he has sat almost under Hooty the Owl.



489. Learning How to Follow Mammy's Tail

"Remember, children, the black shadows are your best friends."

across the Old Pasture on to the Green Meadows, straight to the old briar patch.

“Remember, children, the black shadows are your best friends,” little Mrs. Peter would say. They are always ready to hide you from your enemies. When you suspect that danger is near all you have to do is to freeze,” that is, sit perfectly still, as your father has taught you to do, in the blackest part of a black shadow and you will be safe.”

When the black shadows had crept all through the old briar patch little Mrs. Peter would start the game of “follow mammy’s tail.” You know, her tail is snowy white, and the four little bunnies could see that when they couldn’t see the rest of her at all. “Now, keep your eyes right on my tail,” she would say. “Don’t try to look at anything else, because if you do I may make a sudden turn, and then you will not know where I have gone. Keep your eyes right on my tail, and then if suddenly I disappear, you will know that I have sat down on it and you are to sit down too until you see it again.”

Then she would start off along the little paths through the old briar patch slowly at first, then faster and faster. After her would scamper the four little bunnies, their big eyes fixed on that bobbing white spot which they knew was mammy’s tail. Sometimes it would bob up quite high. Then they knew that she had jumped over a stick, and they would be ready to jump over it too when they reached it. Then, just as they were running their hardest, it would vanish. That meant that she was sitting on it, and at once all four would sit on their own tails and keep their eyes fast on the place where they had last seen that twinkling white spot. Finally, they would see it again, and know that Mrs. Peter had started on.

It was great fun, the greatest kind of fun! By and by, when they were almost out of breath, little Mrs. Peter would wait for them, and when they reached her they were sure to find she had led them to a patch of sweet clover or other goodies. Once the white spot disappeared and they sat perfectly still until they saw it again. When finally it waited for them to catch up there was a surprise for them. What was it? Why, Peter Rabbit instead of Mrs. Peter was waiting for them. He had changed off with Mrs. Peter for a joke. The next night he tried it again, but this time he didn’t fool little Pete, who was very quick and smart. He noticed right away that the white spot was bigger than the one they had been following and he knew right away what it meant. You see, he had noticed that Peter had a larger tail than little Mrs. Peter.

STORY 490. September 8, 1913

Little Pete Didn’t Mean to be Careless

Alas! alack! O, deary me!
How easy ‘tis to careless be!

Little Pete didn’t mean to be careless. Few who are careless ever do mean to be. That’s the trouble—it’s so easy to be careless and so hard to be careful. It is bad enough for you and me to be careless, but it is worse for little meadow and forest people. O, my, yes! It is a lot worse for them to be careless because—well, you see dreadful things

are likely to happen to them if they forget and are careless even for just a few minutes.

So, of course, Little Pete didn't mean to be careless. It happened one night when with Little Jed and their sisters, Fuzzy and Wuzzy, he was playing "follow mammy's tail." They had followed the twinkling white tail of little Mrs. Peter all through the old briar patch and then when they reached the very edge suddenly it disappeared. They all knew what that meant—that Mrs. Peter had sat down on her tail and that the thing for them to do was to sit down on their own funny little tails and watch where they had last seen her; then as soon as they saw the white spot again to follow it as before.

Now stopping where they did on the very edge of the old briar patch was a bad thing, a very bad thing for Little Pete. Of course, it ought not to have been, but it was. You see, he could peep out onto the wonderful great Green Meadows, and you have no idea how he longed to go out and explore them. He was always dreaming about the days when he should be big enough to go where he pleased, just as Peter Rabbit did, and, if the truth is to be told. I suspect that right down in his foolish little heart he felt that he was big enough already. So when they stopped right on the edge of the old briar patch Little Pete forgot that he should keep his eyes on the place where he had last seen his mother's tail.

He wanted to see what the Green Meadows looked like in the starlight, and so without thinking that he was disobeying—just carelessness and thoughtlessness, which is the same thing—he turned his head and peeped out on the great Green Meadows. There were strange shadows out there and a wandering little Night Breeze brought him the smell of sweet clover. It made his mouth water and he began to wonder how far away that clover patch was. It couldn't be very far: he was sure of that. Then Little Pete forgot how he happened to be there on the edge of the old briar patch and began to dream his foolish dreams of what he would do when he was grown up and could go and come as he pleased.

Now while he was dreaming these pleasant dreams Mrs. Peter started on and after her scampered Little Jed and Fuzzy and Wuzzy, who hadn't turned their heads, and so saw her white tail as soon as it began to move. They all supposed that of course Little Pete was following, too. By and by Little Pete realized that he had been sitting still a long time, a very much longer time than was usual when they were playing "follow mammy's tail." Then with a guilty start he re-membered that he hadn't been watching in the right place. He turned quickly to look where he had last seen that white spot which he knew to be his mother's tail, but all was dark.

"She hasn't moved yet," said he with a sigh of relief. Then he tried to put all thought of the Green Meadows out of his mind and kept his eyes fast on the place where he should have kept them in the first place. The minutes slipped away and each one seemed longer than the one before, for there was no sign of a twinkling white spot. It was very, very still. Little Pete began to grow uneasy. He felt a queer little sinking feeling inside. Could his mother have moved while he had his head turned? He didn't really think this could be, but still he felt guilty and uneasy. Where were his sisters and

his brother? He would try a little soft signal. Very lightly he struck the ground with one hind foot. There was no reply. He tried a louder signal. Still no reply. Suddenly Little Pete felt very, very much alone.

STORY 491. September 9, 1913

Little Pete Follows a Spot of White

If I do just as I am told,
Why, then, my mother'll never scold.

Little Pete said this over and over to himself as he sat in the dark just at the edge of the old briar patch, looking and looking for a white spot to follow as it bobbed along the little paths that crossed and recrossed in every direction. You see, he had been playing "follow mammy's tail," a play-lesson all little rabbits have to learn. The white spot for which he was looking was the tail of his mother, little Mrs. Peter Rabbit; all that he could see of her when she ran ahead of him in the dark. The trouble with Little Pete was that he had not remembered that little verse soon enough.

You see, Mrs. Peter had suddenly sat down and, of course, her tail had disappeared, for she was sitting on it. Little Pete and his brother and sisters had at once sat down, too, as they had been taught to do. But instead of watching for his mother to move again, Little Pete had turned his head to look out on the Green Meadows and while his head was turned Mrs. Peter had gone on and so had Little Jed and Fuzzy and Wuzzy. But Little Pete didn't know this and so he waited and waited and grew anxious and more anxious and still more anxious. And when at last he ventured to signal softly and then louder, but got no reply, he felt so lonely he wanted to cry.

He was trying to decide what he should do when he just happened to glance out on the shadowy Green Meadows. What was that? Surely, it was a white spot and it was moving. Could it be his mother's tail? Little Pete rubbed his eyes and looked very, very hard. It was a long way off and growing smaller all the time, by which Little Pete knew that it was moving away from him. The longer he looked the more sure he felt that it must be the tail of his mother.

"O, dear, I wish I knew. I wish I knew!" he sighed. "She didn't say anything about going out on the Green Meadows. Perhaps she was planning it for a surprise. I do believe she was and I do so want to go out there! It's funny I don't see the tails of Fuzzy and Wuzzy and Little Jed, but perhaps that is because the grass hides them. I wish I knew what to do. If I stay here, I'll be perfectly safe, but I'll get a good scolding for not watching and so knowing just when mammy moved. If that is her out there, of course, the thing for me to do is to mind what she has said so often and follow her and do just what she does. Then she need never know how nearly I lost her and I won't get a scolding."

The white spot was growing smaller and smaller and little Peter was undecided what to do. He remembered how many, many times he had been told not to put so much as his nose outside the old briar patch, because the Green Meadows were very,

very unsafe for little rabbits. Then he thought of his sisters and brother and how they would brag and boast if they should find out that they had been out on the Meadows with their mother and he hadn't.

"They'll just tease me to death," he said to himself. "I don't believe there is any danger out there anyway. If I get out there and find that that white spot isn't mammy's tail I can just turn around and run back here and no one need know anything about it. Besides I just know that that is mammy out there and she won't like it a bit if she finds I am not with her. There's no use staying here. I'm just going, so there!"

And with that Little Peter crept out of the dear, safe, old briar patch and started as fast as his little legs would take him after the white spot out on the great shadowy Green Meadows.

STORY 492. September 10, 1913

Little Pete Catches Up with White Spot

Lipperty-lipperty-lip scampered Little Pete out on to the great shadowy Green Meadows with his eyes fast on the white spot which he was sure was his mother's tail. Out here there were, no nice little paths cut by his father, Peter Rabbit, and running wasn't as easy as he had thought it would be. Sometimes the meadow grass was so tall and thick that he couldn't run and would lose sight of the twinkling white spot he was trying so hard to catch up with. Then when he had crawled through to where the grass was shorter, he would see it again and try harder than ever to catch up.

He had felt very brave when he left the old briar patch. He had said to himself that there wasn't the least bit of danger out on the Green Meadows. But the farther he got the more a certain little uneasy feeling grew. How big the Green Meadows were and how very, very small he was! How terribly lonesome it was out here all alone! He did wish that his mother would sit down and wait for him. But if she should sit down, he wouldn't be able to see her tail, which was all he could see of her in the dark. When he remembered that he hoped that she wouldn't sit down, because without that to watch he would feel even more lonely and frightened than he did now. The very thought made him catch his breath and try to run faster, although he was getting out of breath now.

So he kept his eyes fast on that moving white spot and struggled on. It was growing bigger now and Little Pete knew that he was getting nearer to it. His courage began to come back a little. It seemed to him that he had been running a long, long time, such a long time! It was queer that his mother should go so far out on the meadows. It was still more queer that he couldn't see the little white tails of his brother and sisters, for, of course, they must be just behind her.

And how funny she ran! When he had followed her along the little paths through the dear old briar patch her white tail had bobbed up and down, up and down, but now it hardly bobbed at all. But it kept moving, sometimes very fast and sometimes so slowly that he had hard work to make sure that it moved at all. Sometimes it went off to one side and then suddenly would turn and go in the other direction.

Once it seemed to come straight toward him. Little Pete sat down and stared at it. It was queer. Yes, sir, it was very queer!

He never had seen his mother run backward, but if she wasn't running backward, how could he see her tail coming toward him? If she had turned to run toward him, of course he couldn't have seen her tail at all. Yet here was this white spot coming nearer and nearer! It must be that something was wrong with his eyes. He rubbed them and then closed them for just a minute. When he opened them again the white spot was going away from him.

"It was my eyes," " said little Pete with a sigh of relief, and started on again. But still he had a queer feeling. Somehow it didn't seem right.

Just then he heard the terrible hunting call of Hooty the Owl. Little Pete shivered all over. He had heard it before when he was safe in the old briar patch, but out here on the Green Meadows it sounded ever and ever so much louder and so dreadfully fierce! It made him run faster than ever, lipperty-lipperty-lip!

At last he was almost up to the white spot he had been chasing so long. Just ahead was a dark little patch which he thought might be a bush. The white spot stopped there and Little Peter made one last effort to catch up. He felt, O, so weak and trembly, for his little legs were very, very tired with his long run. "O, mother!" he panted. "O—"

Little Pete gave a frightened gasp and fell flat right where he was, too frightened to move. His mother wasn't there at all! The white spot he had thought was her tail was nothing but a piece of paper which a sportive little Night Breeze had been blowing about over the Green Meadows.

STORY 493. September 11, 1913

All, All Alone at Night on the Meadows

All alone, all, all alone!
Not a friendly face around;
Not one wee familiar sound!
It's enough to make one weep
And all over crawl and creep
To be all, all, all alone.

Little Pete found it so. He hadn't known what loneliness was before. Sometimes he had thought that he was lonely in the old briar patch when he waked up from a nap to find himself alone. But then he knew that he wouldn't have to look very long to find his brother and sisters at play, with Peter Rabbit or little Mrs. Peter keeping watch. Now—well, now here he was out in the great shadowy Green Meadows all alone and without the least idea where his mother or brother or little sisters or even the dear old briar patch itself were.

You see, he had followed a spot of white out on to the Green Meadows, thinking it was his mother's tail twinkling in the dark. After a long, long chase he had caught up

with it only to find that it wasn't Mrs. Peter's tail at all, but a piece of paper which a wandering little Night Breeze was blowing about just for fun. And now Little Pete was lost—so very much lost that he hadn't the least idea in the world which way to turn.

When he had left the old briar patch he had said to himself that if the white spot should prove not to be Mrs. Peter all he would have to do would be to turn around and run back to the old briar patch where he would be safe. But he had chased that piece of paper so far and in so many different directions that now he was all mixed up. There were dark patches and black shadows everywhere he looked, but which was the old briar patch? Sometimes he thought one was, and then he was sure that another was, and finally he gave up guessing.

Of course, he cried when he found that he was lost. Even grown folks cry with fright some-times, so what could You expect of a poor, lost, tired little bunny? After a while the tears stopped and Little Pete felt better.

You see, he felt rested in the first place, and in the second place he was such a happy-go- lucky little fellow that he never could feel very badly long at a time. And then, too, he had a stout heart. In this he was like his father, Peter Rabbit, who always believes that nothing is ever so bad that it cannot be worse. He looked up and a thousand friendly little, stars twinkled down at him. He had seen some of them through the brambles of the old briar patch, and now they seemed like old friends, as indeed they were. But what a lot of them! He had had no idea the sky was so big, and he wondered what kept the twinkling little stars up there.

He was still terribly lonely and frightened, but way down deep, deep inside a little feeling of pleasant excitement began to stir and then to grow. He began to feel sure that somehow he would get safely home again. Then what a lot he would have to tell his brother, Little Jed, and his sisters. Fuzzy and Wuzzy! How big and brave and smart they would think him! Pooh! What was there to be afraid of? He sat up very straight under the little bush where he had caught up with the piece of paper, and then, just as he was thinking how big and brave he must look, he heard two voices right behind him. They were the voices of Reddy Fox and Granny Fox.

STORY 494. September 12, 1913

Little Pete in Fear Holds his Breath

"Shall we go down to the old briar patch?" asked Reddy Fox.

"Yes," replied old Granny Fox, "we may as well have a look at those young Rabbits and see how they are coming along."

"I hear from Sammy Jay that Peter Rabbit is beginning to teach them instead of letting them play all day long," said Reddy.

"Good!" replied Granny. "Pretty soon one or two of them will think that they know all there is to know and that the old briar patch is too small for them. Then we will be likely to have Rabbit dinner."

Reddy smacked his lips in reply, and little cold shivers chased each other up and down the backbone of Little Pete, for he knew that Granny and Reddy Fox were talking about himself and his little brother and sisters. It would have been bad enough to have heard this if he had been safe in the dear old briar patch, but he wasn't. No, sir, he wasn't! He was all, all alone, lost 'way out on the Green Meadows, with nothing but a little bush between him and Granny and Reddy. He held his breath. Yes, indeed, he held his breath, you may be very sure!

It had seemed to Little Pete that he certainly must scream right out when he first heard their voices. You see, he was terribly frightened and he felt so helpless. But he didn't scream. Just in time he remembered what Peter Rabbit had tried so hard to teach him—that when you see or hear some one of whom you are afraid, but have reason to think that they do not see you, the thing to do is to “freeze,” that is, sit perfectly still. So Little Pete had held his tongue between his teeth to keep from screaming, and then he had sat perfectly still.

Now, Little Pete didn't feel at all brave. O, my, no! He felt anything but brave. And yet he really was doing a very brave thing.

He was afraid, terribly afraid, and it seemed as if he just must run—as if his little legs would scamper away with him in spite of all he could do. But he didn't let them. He did just what he had been told he should do—sat perfectly still, all the time hearing those voices come nearer and nearer and nearer until they were right on the other side of the little bush under which he was sitting. There Granny and Reddy Fox took it into their heads to sit down. Little Pete tried harder than ever to hold his breath. He could hear his heart go thump, thump, thump, thump, and it seemed to him that they must surely hear it, too.

“Yes,” said Reddy, as if he had been thinking about what Granny had said. “Yes, tender young Rabbit would taste good. It certainly would. I haven't had much of anything excepting grass-hoppers for a week, and, while grasshoppers are very nice when you have enough of them, there is nothing like a change once in a while. I hope Peter Rabbit won't teach those babies of his to be as smart as he is. I don't like to own up that any one is too smart for me, but so far Peter has managed to keep out of my way.”

“Yes,” replied old Granny Fox, and there was an ugly sound to it. “Peter Rabbit has been lucky. He certainly has been lucky. It isn't his smartness, but his luck, that has kept his skin whole so long.”

But little Pete knew better. He knew that his father, Peter Rabbit, had been too smart for Granny and Reddy Fox and suddenly he felt a great pride swelling his heart until he almost forgot to hold his breath.

STORY 495. September 13, 1913

Friendly Little Night Breeze Saves Pete

I'm just a little Night Breeze,

Illustrations. September 8 to September 13, 1913.



490. Little Pete Didn't Mean to be Careless
Suddenly Little Pete felt very, very much alone.



491. Little Pete Follows a Spot of White!
"There's no use staying here. I'm going, so there!"



492. Little Pete Catches Up with White Spot!
"O, Mother!" he panted.



493. All, All Alone at Night on the Meadows
He looked up and a thousand friendly little stars twinkled down at him.



494. Little Pete in Fear Holds His Breath
"Shall we go down to the Old Briar Patch?" asked Reddy Fox.



495. Friendly Little Night Breeze Saves Pete
Danny Meadow Mouse

A little friend of all.
I fetch and carry messages
Alike for great and small.

The little Night Breeze, who had blown the piece of paper that had fooled Little Pete, and so led him far out on the great shadowy Green Meadows in the belief that he was following his mother's tail, was coming back humming to himself. Little Pete, sitting under a lone little bush and trying so hard to keep his teeth from chattering with fright, because right on the other side of the bush sat Granny and Reddy Fox, heard him and didn't know whether to be glad or sorry. If the little Night Breeze should tell them who was sitting so close to them trying to hold his breath—Little Pete just wouldn't let himself finish that thought. It was too dreadful.

But if the little Night Breeze would carry a message for him to his mother or to Peter Rabbit over in the old briar patch, he felt sure all would be well. So he sat and waited between fear and hope.

Now the little Night Breeze hadn't anything in particular to do that night. He was just wandering about humming to himself, stopping to dance among the meadow grasses, whispering to the treetops, making little ripples on the Smiling Pool. He was growing tired of just play, and wishing he could find something to do, when he came up to where old Granny Fox and Reddy Fox were sitting.

Now, like the Merry Little Breezes of Old Mother West Wind, this little Night Breeze was very fond of gathering scent. He always carried some with him, some sweet and some not so sweet. It didn't make a bit of difference to him so long as it was scent. But he couldn't carry any of it very far, because he kept spilling it on the way. Now, Old Granny Fox and most of the other little meadow people knew all about this habit of the little Breezes, and they always try all the different kinds of scents with their noses, because from them they learn a great deal. It was so this time. No sooner had the little Night Breeze reached them than Granny Fox began to sniff and sniff.

There was the scent of sweet clover and of a dozen other flowers, but these didn't interest her in the least. Then she caught a whiff, just a tiny whiff of something that made her lift her nose a little higher and sniff a little more carefully. It was the scent of Danny Meadow Mouse, and Granny knew that the little Night Breeze must have left Danny only a few minutes before. She grinned, and a look of hunger crept into her eyes.

"Come on, Reddy," said she. "I think we'll go hunting."

So, sniffing, sniffing, where the little Night Breeze had spilled the scent of Danny Meadow Mouse, Granny and Reddy Fox began to tiptoe away from the little bush. Little Pete gave a great sigh of relief as he heard them leave. Then suddenly a great fear filled his heart once more, but this time it was not fear for himself. It was fear for Danny Meadow Mouse. He was just going to speak to the little Night Breeze when the latter danced away and with a sudden rush passed straight over Granny and Reddy Fox and on to where he knew Danny Meadow Mouse was. Of course he carried with him a

lot of Fox scent, and he knew that as soon as Danny smelled that he would know what to do. Then the little Night Breeze danced back to the little lone bush and so found Little Pete hiding there.

STORY 496. September 15, 1913

Little Pete Learns What his Nose is For

The friendly little Night Breeze, who had warned Danny Meadow Mouse that old Granny Fox and Reddy Fox were about, danced back to the lone little bush behind which sat Little Pete. He didn't know anything about Little Pete being there and when he found him there, he almost lost his breath he was so surprised.

"Hello!" he exclaimed. "Hello! Who are you?" Then he saw who it was, for he often had seen Little Pete at home in the old briar patch with his brother and sisters. He was more surprised than ever. "Why, why, it's Little Pete Rabbit!" he cried. "What are you doing so far away from the old briar patch? Does your father know where you are? Don't you know that it isn't the least bit safe for little bunnies way out here? Where is your mother?"

He asked these questions so fast that each one almost tripped over the one before it, and Little Pete didn't have time to answer any of them before the little Night Breeze suddenly exploded. At least that is the way it seemed to Little Pete, for suddenly he drew in a great breath and let it all out at once as he exclaimed:

"I know what the matter is! You've run away! That's what you've done—you've run away from home!"

Little Pete didn't know just what to say, and then it came over him how he had been fooled into thinking a piece of paper was the white tail of his mother.

"I don't care," he sobbed. "It wasn't all my fault. If it hadn't been for you, I'd be safe at home in the old briar patch this very minute."

"What's that?" demanded the little Night Breeze sharply. "What's that you're saying? What did I have to do with it? Tell me that! What did I have to do with it?"

Then Little Pete told how he had been playing "follow mammy's tail" with his mother and brother and sisters in the dear old briar patch, and how he had failed to keep watch and so had lost sight of his mother's white tail. Then he told how he had seen a white spot way out in the shadowy Green Meadows and feeling sure that it was his mother's tail had chased after it only to find that it was only a piece of paper with which the little Night Breeze had been playing.

"Phew!" whistled the little Night Breeze, who really was a very friendly little fellow. "It really does look as if I had got you into trouble, although I didn't have the least idea of such a thing. Now I guess I'll have to do what I can to get you out."

As he spoke he came a little closer. A dreadful smell filled Little Pete's nose. It made him feel a little sick to his stomach and at the same time filled him with a

nameless fear. "O!" he gasped, holding on to his nose, "what is that dreadful smell?"

"Why!" exclaimed the little Night Breeze, "don't you know what that is? That's the scent of Granny and Reddy Fox. Whenever you smell that you must watch out."

"But they were sitting right on the other side of this bush and I didn't smell them," cried little Pete.

"That's because there wasn't any wind stirring and when I came along, I took all the scent the other way. It's a lucky thing I didn't happen to come from this direction, for I might have carried your scent to them before I noticed you and then they surely would have found you. It is very plain to me that you have not yet learned to use your nose, and I think now is a good time to begin. Now I am going off to collect some scent and when I come back you see how many you can pick out."

So the friendly little Night Breeze went off and presently came back. Little Pete sniffed and sniffed and tried to pick out the different scents. It was almost like one of the games in the old briar patch, only this wasn't just in fun, as the little Night Breeze took pains to point out. It was to teach Little Pete how that wobbly little nose of his could be taught to tell him a great deal that his long ears couldn't hear and his big eyes couldn't see.

"Never, never forget to try all the scents from every passing breeze wherever you may be," said the little Night Breeze. And Little Pete promised.

STORY 497. September 16, 1913

Another Friend Appears

A friend who unexpectedly appears beside the way,
Is like a ray of sunshine on a dark and gloomy day.

Little Pete, sitting under the lone bush, out on the great, shadowy Green Meadows, was feeling very much better than he did when he first discovered that he was lost. You see, then he had felt all, all alone, and if you have never felt it, you cannot know what a terrible feeling that is. Then along had come a friendly little Night Breeze and had tried to help him by teaching him how to use his funny little wobbly nose, so that by means of it he might tell when danger, which his big eyes could not see and his long ears could not hear, was near.

So Little Pete was feeling very much better, as he and the friendly little Night Breeze sat talking about what it would be best for Little Pete to do. Of course, it wouldn't be quite true to say that the little Night Breeze was sitting, because he wasn't quite still an instant. He couldn't be, you know. But he was as nearly still as he could be, and Little Pete was sitting perfectly still. They were trying to decide if Little Pete should try to get back to the dear old briar patch, when suddenly something came rushing down out of the sky with a noise that made Little Pete make a frightened jump before he realized what he was doing.

"Tut, tut! That was very careless, very careless, indeed!" said a voice. "I didn't see

you until you jumped, and it's a lucky thing for you, a very lucky thing, that I am not Hooty the Owl, or that would have been the last jump you ever would have made. Who are you and what are you doing way out here on the Green Meadows?"

"I—I'm Little Pete, and my father is Peter Rabbit and—and I'm lost, if you please," replied Little Pete in a voice that shook in spite of all he could do.

"O!" replied the stranger, skimming back and forth over the grass and twisting and turning as he snapped up little flying insects.

"So you are one of Peter Rabbit's babies?"

"I'm not a baby any longer," said Little Pete indignantly.

"O, yes, you are," replied the stranger, "for if you were not you wouldn't have jumped that way."

Little Pete hung his head in shame. "I—I thought for a minute that it must be that one of the little stars had fallen from the sky and—and it frightened me," he confessed.

"There is no star about me," the stranger replied. "I'm Boomer the Nighthawk, and an old, old friend of your father, Peter Rabbit. Now, tell me how it happens that you are 'way out here so far from the old briar patch."

So Little Pete once more told the story of how it happened that he had become lost, and Boomer the Nighthawk listened as he skimmed back and forth and round and round without ever once stopping. When the story was finished Boomer suddenly disappeared. A few minutes later, just as Little Pete was wondering if he had gone for good, down out of the sky he dropped with even more noise than he had made the first time. But now Little Pete didn't move, although inside of him his heart had given a startled jump.

"That's better," said Boomer. "I believe you are learning. Now remember, that no matter what happens, you should never move until you know that it is more dangerous to sit still. Be sure before you jump. Now, the question is, what are you going to do?"

"I don't know," replied Little Pete. "I want to go home, but I don't know the way to the dear old briar patch."

"You can't go home," said Boomer, decidedly. "Old Granny Fox and Reddy Fox are hunting just outside the old briar patch right now. You will have to find a hiding place somewhere, and in the meantime, I will go tell Peter Rabbit that I have seen you." And without another word Boomer was off.

STORY 498. September 17, 1913

Little Pete Does Some Hard Thinking

When Boomer the Nighthawk went skimming off into the night to hunt up Peter Rabbit and tell him that Little Pete was lost on the great shadowy Green Meadows he left a very unhappy little Rabbit sitting under the Lone Bush. The friendly little Night Breeze had wandered off while Boomer the Nighthawk had been talking, and now that

Boomer had gone Little Pete was once more all, all alone. He shivered just a wee, wee bit, little cold shivers of lonesome fright. Then he shook himself and tried his very hardest to smile.

When you are lonely, feeling bad,
And always when you're feeling sad,
Try a smile.
When you are worried sick with fright,
When all is black and nothing bright,
Try a smile.

That thought popped into Little Pete's head at just the right time. He had heard his mother say those verses ever and ever so many times, but they never had meant anything to him until now. But now—well, wasn't he lonely and feeling bad and sad? And was not he worried and almost sick with fright? And wasn't everything black, just as black as could be? As he thought of this he just happened to look up. A thousand friendly little stars were winking and twinkling down at him. Almost before he thought what he was doing Little Pete smiled up at them.

Right then he realized that things were not as black as they seemed, and he smiled again. With that smile the little shivers of fright stopped chasing one another up and down his backbone, and somehow he felt less worried.

"Mammy was right," said Little Pete to himself. "Mammy was right. A smile makes everything look different. I guess things are not so bad that they couldn't be worse, and if they do get worse, I'll just have to smile harder. The question is, what am I to do next? Boomer the Nighthawk said that I must find a hiding place, and I guess Boomer is right, but I wish that some one would tell a lost little Rabbit how he is to find a hiding place when he hasn't the least idea in the world where to look for one."

Then Little Pete settled down to do some hard thinking. He never before had had to do much thinking—just do as he saw Peter Rabbit or Mrs. Peter do, or as they told him to do. Now that there was no one to copy or to tell him what to do, he must plan for himself, and he had heard his mother say that to plan things well requires a great deal of hard thinking. So this was what he had set himself to do.

"I can't stay here, for when daylight comes old Redtail the Hawk would be sure to see me," said he, thinking out aloud. "What I must do is to find a patch of briars or some place big enough for me to squeeze into and too small for any of my enemies to follow. I don't know in which direction to go, but I guess the best way to do is to choose one direction and stick to it; then I will be sure to get somewhere. Now, that big black shadow way over there looks as if it might be made by a big patch of bushes. I think I will go over and find out."

And so with a brave smile to make himself think he wasn't afraid Little Pete left the lone little bush and once more started out across the great shadowy Green Meadows, which seemed to him nothing less than the Great Wide World.

STORY 499. September 18, 1913

The Heedlessness of Little Pete

Little Pete felt that he had learned a great deal since he became lost on the great, shadowy Green Meadows, and now, as he started on to try to find a safe hiding place before jolly, round, red Mr. Sun should come climbing up in the blue sky, to sweep away the twinkling little stars, he was sure that he could take care of himself. Of course, he felt very shivery whenever he thought of all the dangers, and he couldn't help but feel lonesome, but he tried his best not to think of these things. He tried his best to smile. You see, he had found out that a smile helps wonderfully, and even when there was nothing to smile at, if he smiled he felt better.

Now, Little Pete was a very, very small rabbit to be out in the great wide world all alone. He found that his little legs soon grew tired, especially where the grass was tall and it was hard work to get through. And yet he felt that these tall grasses were his friends for they hid him from hungry eyes such as those of Hooty the Owl and Reddy Fox. But they made him a lot of trouble, too. You see, he wasn't tall enough even when he sat up to look over them and so he never could be sure that he was keeping in the direction in which he wanted to go.

He was growing a little bit discouraged when he came to a little path, the dearest little path he had ever seen. It was such a teeny, weeny path, right under the tall grasses, that it was almost like a tunnel. Now, Little Pete knew that, of course, this little path had been made by some one and that it was probably used by some one. So, of course, as long as he didn't know who that some one was, he should have been very careful about using it. But he was so delighted to find an easier place to run that he didn't stop to think about anything else. If he had been any bigger he couldn't have used it, but as it was, by keeping his ears flat, he could run along it very nicely.

"I wonder where it leads to," said he, as he hurried along. "I hope it will lead me to a good hiding place."

Now, as he hurried on, Little Pete got to thinking of all that had happened to him that night and what wonderful stories he would have to tell his little brother and sisters when he reached his home in the dear old briar patch, and, thinking of these things, he quite forgot to use his eyes and his ears and his nose, as he should have done, to warn him if any one was near. You see, he was heedless. Yes, sir, Little Pete was heedless. He hurried along with his head full of foolish thoughts and almost ran plump into some one sitting in the path. He would have if a sharp, squeaky little voice hadn't suddenly demanded:

"Why don't you look where you are going? And I'd like to know what you are doing in my private path, anyway."

"Oh," exclaimed Little Pete in a frightened voice. "I—I—didn't see you, and I—I didn't know that this was your private path."

"Well, whose did you suppose it was?" asked the voice crossly.

“I didn’t know it was anybody’s in particular,” replied Little Pete meekly.

“I suppose you thought it grew, just like the grass,” continued the squeaky little voice. “Let me tell you that it didn’t. I made it and it represents a lot of honest work. Now, who are you and what are you doing here?”

By this time Little Pete had discovered that the speaker was no bigger than himself and so he was not so frightened as at first. But he knew that he really had no business there, and so he was very polite as he told who he was and how he happened to be there. The owner of the squeaky voice heard him all through and then, when he replied all the crossness had left his voice.

“So you are one of Peter Rabbit’s children,” said he, “I might have known it, for you’re just as heedless as your father. I’m Danny Meadow Mouse and it’s a mighty lucky thing for you that you happened to find one of my paths instead of the path of some one who would have gobbled you up. Peter Rabbit is one of my best friends, and so I guess I shall have to see what I can do to get you out of this scrape.”

“O, if you only will!” cried Little Peter gratefully.

STORY 500. September 19, 1913

Danny Meadow Mouse Proves a Friend Indeed

Danny Meadow Mouse listened to all that Little Pete had to tell him of how he had lost his way on the Green Meadows and shook his head a great many times before he made up his mind what was best to do to help Little Pete out of his scrape.

“You are a lucky little Rabbit,” said he, “to have gotten as far as this with a whole skin. It must be that Old Mother Nature has had her eye on you and has taken care of you. You certainly are a very lucky Rabbit! You cannot go back to the dear old briar patch tonight because Boomer the Nighthawk says that Granny and Reddy Fox are hunting around there. You can’t stay here be-cause you are too big to run fast along my little paths, and when daylight comes Redtail the Hawk, whose eyes are very, very sharp, would be sure to see the grass move whenever you moved and would be almost sure to catch you. It will be daylight pretty soon now and there isn’t any time to lose. Let me see! Let me see!”

Danny put his chin in both hands and did some hard thinking, while Little Pete watched him anxiously. At last Danny hopped up.

“I have it!” he cried. “What you need is an old stonewall to hide in, and the nearest one is not very far from here. It is along one side of Farmer Brown’s garden, and because there is almost sure to be some one working there every day Granny and Reddy Fox never go there during day-light, and Redtail the Hawk and all his relatives keep away from there. If you keep hidden you have nothing to fear unless Shadow the Weasel should happen along, and I don’t believe he will, for I haven’t known him to come over this way for a long, long time. Now you follow me.”

Danny started along one of his little paths. Pretty soon it branched off into another,

and this into a third, and then into still another. It seemed to Little Pete that he never had seen so many paths, not even in the old briar patch. He began to wonder how Danny Meadow Mouse ever kept from getting lost in his own paths. But he seemed to know just where he was going, and he ran so fast Little Pete had hard work not to lose sight of him. You see Danny had no white tail to guide him, and so he had to keep right at Danny's heels.

After a while Danny stopped beside a pile of great hard things unlike anything Little Pete had seen in all his short life. They were piled one on another as far as he could see, and along them were growing weeds and bushes.

"What are they?" he whispered.

"Stones, you stupid. This is the old stone wall I told you about," replied Danny shortly. You see he had forgotten that Little Pete had seen so little of the great world. "Now the thing for you to do is to find a snug hiding place under these stones and never go far from it. You will find plenty to eat close by, and if you take my advice, you will stay right here until Peter Rabbit comes to take you home. I will try to get word to him where you are. Farmer Brown's garden is right on the other side and whatever you do, don't go over there. You are almost sure to get in trouble if you do. Now I must hurry home, for I see Mr. Sun is already beginning to kick his night clothes off. Now mind what I say and stick to the old stone wall!"

Little Pete promised and with a hurried goodbye Danny Meadow Mouse started back the way they had come. Little Pete hopped along until he found the snuggest kind of a hole down between two big stones and into this he crept for a nap, for he was very, very tired and sleepy.

"Safe and snug at last am I
And now to keep so I will try,"

he murmured sleepily, and he really meant it.

STORY 501. September 21, 1913

The Wonderful Old Stonewall

Little Pete, the lost baby of Peter Rabbit, wondered where he was, for as yet he was not fully awake. He was in a snug little room with walls of stone, quite dark, but for the little bar of golden sunshine which coming in at the doorway had wakened him. For a minute or two he lay blinking at the little ray of sunshine. Then all in a flash he remembered. He was in the old stonewall to which Danny Meadow Mouse had brought him the night before. All the sleepy-winks left him. He was sure from what he had seen of it in the dark that it must be a wonderful place, and he just couldn't sit still a minute longer when there was so much to see.

Like a jack-in-the-box Little Pete stuck his head up out of the opening through which he had crawled to his snug resting place. "Oh!" he gasped. "Oh, isn't it wonderful?" Then for a long time he sat without moving, just his head sticking out

Illustrations. September 15 to September 20, 1913.



496. Little Pete Learns What His Nose is For
A dreadful smell filled Little Pete's nose.



497. Another Friend Appears
Suddenly something came rushing down out of the sky.



498. Little Pete Does Some Hard Thinking
Little Pete left the Lone Little Bush and once more started out across the Great Shadowy Green Meadows.



499. The Heedlessness of Little Pete
"So you are one of Peter Rabbit's children," said he.



500. Danny Meadow Mouse Proves a Friend Indeed
"What are they?" he whispered.



501. The Wonderful Old Stonewall
"Have it your own way, Tommy," said he.

between the stones, his big eyes opened their very widest, and his two little ears pointed straight up.

In one direction as far as he could see lay the piled up stones of the old wall with vines covering them in places, and bushes and tall weeds growing up on both sides. It was just the same in the other direction. In front of him was a little fringe of bushes, and looking between them he could see the waving grass of the Green Meadows. Was there ever such a wonderful place for a little Rabbit to play in? It was even better than the dear old briar patch.

Little Pete forgot that he was lost and alone. He itched with curiosity in every hair of his furry coat—curiosity to peek into every nook and cranny of the old stonewall and to find all the splendid hiding places he was sure must be there. But first he must fill his stomach, for it was empty, and there would be no fun exploring on an empty stomach. So very carefully he picked his way to the edge of the Green Meadows, and with eyes and ears and wobbly little nose on guard for danger, he soon found enough tender, sweet clover to fill his stomach. Then he scampered back to explore the old stonewall.

“Hello!” exclaimed a sharp voice.

Little Pete gave a startled jump. Sitting on one of the biggest stones of the old wall was a pert, saucy looking stranger. He was not very big and Little Pete concluded that he couldn’t be an enemy.

“Hello,” he replied. “Who are you?”

The stranger grinned. “My, but you are green!” he exclaimed. “Who am I? Why I thought that everybody knew me. I’m Striped Chipmunk. What are you doing around my stone-wall?”

“I—I—didn’t know that it was your stonewall,” faltered Little Pete. “Danny Meadow Mouse brought me here, and said that I could hide here as long as I wanted to. He didn’t tell me that it belonged to anyone. Will you mind if I stay here a little while?”

Striped Chipmunk had just opened his mouth to reply when another voice broke in. “Don’t you mind what that fellow tells you,” it said. “He doesn’t own the old stonewall any more than you do. He’s just trying to scare you.”

Little Pete and Striped Chipmunk both looked to see the bright eyes of Tommy Tit, the Chickadee, twinkling down at them. Striped Chipmunk made up a face at Tommy Tit.

“I guess it’s mine as much as any one’s,” said he.

“It isn’t anyone’s; it’s everyone’s,” retorted Tommy.

Striped Chipmunk winked at Little Pete. “Have it your own way,” Tommy,” said he. “I guess there’s room for all of us. Come on,” he added to Little Pete, “and I’ll show

you what it is like.”

And so he did. There wasn’t any hole in its whole length that he didn’t know about, and Little Pete found it even more wonderful than he had thought.

“It’s perfectly splendid! I think I’d like to live here always,” he cried at last.

STORY 502. September 22, 1913

Over the Old Stone Wall

Temptation always is at hand to lead one by the nose,
Or hidden close beside the path to trip one by the toes.

It was by the nose, that funny little wobbly nose of his, that temptation caught Little Pete. At first the old stone wall had seemed such a wonderful place that he had had no desire to go away from it. But, after he had explored it to his heart’s content on the side next to the Green Meadows he began to wonder if it was just as nice on the other side. He knew that Farmer Brown’s garden was over there, because Danny Meadow Mouse had said so, and had warned him not to go there lest he should get into trouble.

“I wonder what a garden is, anyway,” said Little Pete one morning as he sat in a warm, sunny spot on the Green Meadow side of the old stone wall. He had spoken out loud without knowing it.

“There’s one right on the other side and all you have to do is to climb over and see for yourself. It’s a wonderful place,” said a smooth voice behind him.

Little Pete turned to see who was speaking, for he had thought himself all alone. There, curled up on a flat stone, in the sun, was little striped Mr. Garter Snake.

“I suppose it is,” replied Little Pete wistfully. “Every place seems wonderful when you can’t go there.”

“What’s the reason you can’t go there?” inquired Mr. Garter Snake.

“Because Danny Meadow Mouse says I am likely to get into trouble if I do,” said Little Pete.

“Trouble, pooh!” exclaimed Mr Garter Snake. “I go over there every day and I don’t get into trouble.”

Now, this wasn’t true, for more than once Farmer Brown’s boy had chased little Mr. Garter Snake to the safety of the old stone wall. But Mr. Garter Snake belongs to a family who would rather tell a wrong story than a true one, and so he continued, “There isn’t the least bit of danger over there. Why don’t you go over and see for yourself? You mustn’t believe everything that Danny Meadow Mouse says, for Danny is afraid of his own shadow.”

“That may be so,” replied Little Pete, “but here I know I’m safe, and while it may be perfectly safe for you over there, it may not be for me.”

“O, well, if you want to be a fraidy like Danny Meadow Mouse you’ll miss half the good things in life,” retorted Mr Garter Snake, lazily uncoiling.

Over the garden wall
Are wonderful things for all;
Things good to eat
That can’t be beat,
Over the garden wall.

Little Pete sat for a long time thinking of what Mr Garter Snake had said. The more he thought about it the more he wanted to see that garden. Anyway, it wouldn’t do any harm to climb up on the wall and look at it. He could see it and still be perfectly safe. So he scrambled up to the top of the wall where he could see Farmer Brown’s garden. How nice it did look! It was quite different from the Green Meadows. He had never seen growing things like those. He wondered if they were good to eat.

Just then along came one of the Merry Little Breezes of Old Mother West Wind and tickled Little Pete’s nose with the most delicious smell. He sniffed and sniffed, and his mouth began to water. He didn’t have to ask to know that the Merry Little Breeze had brought that smell out of Farmer Brown’s garden. The more he sniffed the stronger grew the temptation to go just a little way and try to find out what it was that smelled so good.

STORY 503. September 23, 1913

Little Pete Sees a Giant

The way is clear,
There’s no one near;
I need a change of diet.
There’s none to know
If I should go,
And so I believe I’ll try it.

Little Pete, sitting on the old stone wall and sniffing at the delicious smells brought from Farmer Brown’s garden by one of the Merry Little Breezes of Old Mother West Wind, said this over to himself half-a-dozen times before he really did venture to try it. Danny Meadow Mouse had told him that he should keep away from that garden or he would be almost sure to get in trouble. Right down in his heart he knew that Danny Meadow Mouse had given him this advice for his own good, but it is a lot easier to believe what one wants to believe, and Little Pete wanted to believe what little Mr. Garter Snake had said—that there was no danger over in Farmer Brown’s garden.

And then those delicious smells brought by the Merry Little Breeze made his mouth water so! Things that smelled so good must taste even better. Down in his heart a little voice said, “Don’t go,” but down in his stomach another little voice said, “Do go.” It was pleasanter to listen to the little voice in his stomach. So he kept saying the little verse over and over to himself to try to make himself feel that it was right. Still

he might not have yielded to temptation if he hadn't happened to see the head of little Mr. Garter Snake sticking out from between two stones a little way along the old stone wall. Mr. Garter Snake was watching him.

"He thinks I'm afraid," thought Little Pete. "He thinks I don't dare go over there. I'll just show him that Danny Meadow Mouse can't frighten me."

With that Little Pete jumped down from the old stone wall on the side where Farmer Brown's garden lay. He didn't look back at little Mr. Garter Snake. Perhaps if he had and had seen the malicious grin on the face of Mr. Garter Snake he wouldn't have ventured beyond the bushes that lined the old stone wall. He certainly wouldn't if he could have heard little Mr. Garter Snake saying to himself, "Another young rabbit who thinks he knows it all. If he lives long enough, he'll learn not to believe all he hears. I think I see trouble waiting for him right over there this very minute."

Little Mr. Garter Snake grinned again as he looked over to where he could see the straw hat of Farmer Brown's boy above the corn in the garden.

But, of course, Little Pete didn't know this, and he hopped along following up those delicious smells. Presently he came to some queer-looking plants with broad leaves, and the delicious smell was stronger than ever. They were cabbages. He nibbled a leaf. My, how good it did taste! It was even better than it smelled. Right away Little Pete forgot all his fears. He could think of nothing but filling his stomach. He hopped from plant to plant, nibbling a little from the tenderest leaves of each. At last his stomach was so full that he felt as if he couldn't move. So he sat down under one of the broad leaves to rest.

"My, I'm glad I came!" said he to himself. "How foolish I'd have been to have minded timid Danny Meadow Mouse."

Hardly had he said it when he heard a heavy footstep close at hand. He peeped out from under the broad leaf and it seemed as if his heart came right up in his mouth and choked him. He was too frightened to move, which, it happens, was a very good thing for him. There, walking down between the rows of cabbages, was a great giant, the queerest animal he had ever seen for it walked on two legs and was so big that if it should step on him, it would crush him.

STORY 504. September 24, 1913

Farmer Brown's Boy Makes a Discovery

Little Pete sat under a broad cabbage leaf in Farmer Brown's garden and watched a terrible two-legged giant come nearer and nearer. Of course you have guessed who the terrible giant was. It was Farmer Brown's boy. But Little Pete didn't know that, and his eyes looked as if they would pop right out of his head, for he had never before seen one of these erect two-legged creatures, and he didn't know whether it would be best to run or to "freeze." To tell the truth, he was so frightened that he didn't feel as if he could run if he wanted to. Somehow his legs felt terribly weak and wobbly. Then, too, he remembered the advice of Boomer the Night Hawk never to run until he was sure that

running was safer than sitting still, and as yet he wasn't sure.

Nearer and nearer came this terrible giant, and he was singing as, with what looked to Little Pete like a long stick with something queer on the end of it, he scraped up by the roots all the grass and little plants growing between the rows of cabbages, and this was what he was singing: From break of day to evensong

I hoe the corn! I hoe the corn!
With happy heart the whole day long
I hoe the corn! I hoe the corn!

Of course, he wasn't hoeing the corn just then, because he was working in the cabbage patch, but the song was just as good there as in the cornfield. Somehow it was easier to make the hoe go back and forth, back and forth when he was singing.

You know it usually is easier to do any kind of work if you sing at the same time.

From break of day to evensong
I hoe the corn! I hoe—

The song stopped right in the middle. The hoe stopped too. Farmer Brown's boy went over and looked closely at a cabbage leaf. Then he moved along to the next plant and did the same thing.

"Ha, ha!" said he in a voice that made Little Pete shiver with fright. "A rabbit has been at work here. This will never do at all. I can't afford to hoe cabbages all day for rabbits to eat."

He picked a leaf and stood up to look at it closely. All along the edge of it were little places where Little Pete had taken tiny bites. "Yes, sir," continued Farmer Brown's boy, still talking to himself, "this certainly is the work of a Rabbit, and a mighty little one at that. Looks to me as if it was just done, too. I wonder if the little scamp is around here now."

He began to walk down the row, poking with his hoe under each plant. Little Pete waited until he saw that the hoe was going to come right under the leaf where he was sitting, and then he knew it was time to run. And how he did run! Of course Farmer Brown's boy saw him. "Hi, there, you cottontail rascal!" he shouted, which made Little Pete run all the faster. All out of breath he reached the old stone wall and dodged into the nearest hiding-place under the friendly stones, where he lay with his heart thumping so that it hurt.

Farmer Brown's boy came over to the old wall and poked his hoe handle in between the stones, and pulled away some of them. But he didn't find Little Pete, and in a few minutes went back to his work. For a long time Little Pete lay panting with fright. "O, dear!" he said to himself over and over again. "O, dear! Danny Meadow Mouse was right after all when he said that I would surely get in trouble if I went over there. I wish I had minded him."

And just a little way off, with his head sticking out between two stones, was little Mr. Garter Snake laughing a wicked laugh all by himself.

The Queer House in the Cabbage Patch

It was two days before Little Pete got over the fright he had received when Farmer Brown's boy chased him out of the cabbage patch into the old stone wall. Every time he thought of what might have happened to him, he shivered. As soon as he had dared to move, he had crept to the Green Meadow side of the old wall and had then and there firmly made up his mind that never, never again would he put so much as one foot in Farmer Brown's garden. "I won't so much as peep over on the other side," said he to himself, and he meant it. Yes, indeed, he meant it.

But good intentions useless are
Unless backed up by deeds.
They're like the garden plants that die
When choked by useless weeds.

For two whole days, while the memory of his great fright was fresh, Little Pete lived up to his good intentions. He didn't once peep over into Farmer Brown's garden. But at the end of two days he had got over his fright. He had seen nothing more of Farmer Brown's boy.

"I was too smart for him that time, and I could be again," he boasted.

"Of course you could," agreed Little Mr. Garter Snake, who had overheard him, "but just the same I don't believe you dare go over there again."

"I do, too!" cried Little Pete, trying to swell himself up to look very big.

"You don't either!" taunted Mr. Garter Snake.

"You wait and see; I'll show you whether I do or not!" cried Little Pete angrily.

Little Mr. Garter Snake only laughed in the most provoking way and curled himself up on a flat stone for a sun bath.

Little Pete went off by himself to sulk and think things over. The more he thought about it the more he wanted to visit Farmer Brown's garden again. That first time he hadn't had half time enough to look around. How good those cabbage leaves had tasted! He wanted more. He felt that he simply must have some more. And there must be other things just as good. It was just a bid of bad luck that Farmer Brown's boy had happened along that time. Ha! he had a happy thought—he would go in the night! There surely would be no danger then.

So that very night Little Pete crept over the old stone wall as soon as the little stars began to twinkle down at him. For a long time he sat looking out at the garden.

"Shall I or shall I not?" he kept saying over to himself.

"Better not," whispered a cautious little voice inside him.

"Pooh! there's nothing to be afraid of now!" said another little voice.

Little Pete liked that voice best and he tried not to hear the first voice. Pretty soon he hopped three or four steps toward the cabbage patch. How his mouth did water as he sniffed and sniffed. Almost without knowing it he hopped a little nearer. Then he tried it again. He was near enough to nibble a leaf now. Two minutes later Little Pete had forgotten all about danger as he stuffed himself with cabbage. When he had eaten all that he could hold he began to look around to see what else that wonderful garden held. Presently he came to a queer thing right between two rows of cabbages. His nose told him that it was made of wood. He hopped all around it. His common sense told him to keep away from it, but his curiosity urged him to find out all about it. It seemed perfectly harmless.

"It must be somebody's house, for there is a door and it's open," said he. "I believe I'll just peek inside. It won't do any harm to just peek."

He poked his wobbly little nose inside the door so invitingly open. There was no one inside, but there was something way at the back that smelled even better than fresh cabbage. Little Pete sniffed and sniffed.

"No one will miss it if I take just a wee, wee bite," thought he, and started to enter.

Thump! Little Pete was sent sprawling among the cabbages. When he could get his breath and scramble to his feet, who do you think was standing over him?

Why, his father, Peter Rabbit.

STORY 506. September 26, 1913

Home Again at Last

When Little Pete recovered his breath and his feet, and looked up to find that it was his father, Peter Rabbit, who had sent him sprawling just as he was about to enter the queer house in Farmer Brown's garden, he was so astonished that he that he couldn't find his tongue. But he didn't need to; Peter was talking enough for both.

"Do you know where you would be now if I hadn't come along in the very nick of time?" asked Peter, and then without waiting for a reply he answered his own question. "You would be a prisoner inside that box. I suppose you thought that was somebody's house, but it isn't; it's a trap. That's what it is—a trap. It was set by Farmer Brown's boy, and if you had been caught he would have carried you away and nobody knows what would have become of you. Now look at it good, and the next time you see anything like it keep away from it. Now you sit right here and watch me."

Peter hopped over behind the queer-looking box which he said was a trap. He cut a string with his sharp teeth and the door which had been so temptingly open closed with a bang that made Little Pete jump.

"That's just what would have happened if you had gone inside and touched that piece of carrot, as you were going to do when I kicked you over among the cabbages," said Peter. "Then what would you have done? Tell me that."

“I—I don’t know,” faltered Little Pete “It looked like a nice little house, and—and I just wanted to see what it was like inside.”

“Curiosity! Just idle curiosity!” snapped Peter. Some day curiosity is likely to get you into trouble which you can’t get out of if you don’t overcome it.”

How Sammy Jay would have laughed if he could have heard Peter say that. You know all his life long curiosity has been Peter’s greatest failing, and has gotten him into all kinds of scrapes. But to have heard him talking to Little Pete you would have thought that it was the very last thing in the world that he himself would have been guilty of.

“Now, what are you over here in Farmer Brown’s garden for?” continued Peter severely. “Didn’t Danny Meadow Mouse warn you not to come over here, but to stick to the old stone wall?”

“Yes,” replied Little Pete in a very low voice, “but little Mr. Garter Snake says that Danny is so timid that he is afraid of his own shadow, and—and I wanted to show him that I wasn’t afraid. Besides, the cabbages did smell so good!”

“So you chose to believe that mischief-maker, Mr. Garter Snake, rather than Danny Meadow Mouse, who had led you safely to the old stone wall and then gone all the way over to the old briar patch to tell me where you were! That shows just what a silly, foolish young Rabbit you are and how much you’ve got to learn before you can be trusted to take care of yourself. If you live long enough, you’ll learn that fear is necessary in order to live. It is only the weak and foolish who are not afraid, and they never live long. It is because he has sense enough to be afraid and is smart enough to use his fear to keep him out of harm’s way that Danny Meadow Mouse hasn’t made a dinner for Reddy Fox or Hooty the Owl long ago. Now see if you have got sense enough left to follow my tail without getting lost again.”

With that Peter started off, his white tail bobbing up and down, and behind him hopped a very meek and humble little Rabbit, his eyes kept fast on the white beacon which was guiding him home. And so at last, tired and foot-sore, he once more reached the dear old briar patch where anxious little Mrs Peter, his brother, Little Jed, and his sisters, Fuzzy and Wuzzy, were waiting him. And somehow Little Pete didn’t feel the least bit like boasting of where he had been and what he had done. Instead he felt something very like shame, but most of all a great gladness to be home once more.

Go where you will
You’ll find that still
No place will do
Like home for you.

STORY 507. September 27, 1913

Timid Danny Meadow Mouse

Danny Meadow Mouse is timid. Everybody says so, and what everybody says

Illustrations. September 22 to September 27, 1913.



502. Over the Old Stone Wall
 "What's the reason you can't go there?" inquired Little Mr. Garden Snake.



503. Little Pete sees a Giant
 There walking down between the rows of cabbage, was a great giant.



504. Farmer Brown's Boy Makes a Discovery
 "Hi there, you Cottontail rascal!" he shouted.



505. The Queer House in the Cabbage Patch
 "I believe I'll just peek inside."



506. Home Again at Last
 Peter popped over behind the queer-looking box, which he said was a trap.



507. Timid Danny Meadow Mouse
 "You see it's this way," said Danny as he sat on his doorstep one sunny morning.

ought to be so. But just as anybody can make a mistake sometimes, so can everybody. Still in this case it is quite likely that everybody is right. Danny Meadow Mouse is timid. Ask Peter Rabbit. Ask Sammy Jay. Ask Striped Chipmunk. They will all tell you the same thing. Sammy Jay might even tell you that Danny is afraid of his own shadow, or that he tries to run away from his own tail. Of course this isn't true. Sammy Jay likes to say mean things. It isn't fair to Danny Meadow Mouse to believe what Sammy Jay says.

But the fact is Danny certainly is timid. More than this, he isn't ashamed of it—not the least little bit.

"You see, it's this way," said Danny as he sat on his doorstep one sunny morning talking to his friend, old Mr. Toad. "If I wasn't afraid I wouldn't be all the time watching out, and if I wasn't all the time watching out, I wouldn't have any more chance than that foolish red ant running across in front of you."

Old Mr. Toad looked where Danny was pointing, and his tongue darted out and back again so quickly that Danny wasn't sure that he saw it at all, but when he looked for the ant it was nowhere to be seen, and there was a satisfied twinkle in Mr. Toad's eyes. There was an answering twinkle in Danny's own eyes as he continued.

"No, sir," said he, "I wouldn't stand a particle more chance than that foolish ant did. Now, if I was big and strong like Old Man Coyote or had swift wings like Skimmer the Swallow, or was so homely and ugly that no one wanted me like—like—" Danny hesitated and then finished rather lamely, "like some folks I know, I suppose I wouldn't be afraid."

Old Mr. Toad looked up rather sharply when Danny mentioned homely and ugly looking people, but Danny was gazing far out across the Green Meadows and looked so innocent that Mr. Toad concluded that he couldn't have had him in mind.

"Well," said he, thoughtfully scratching his nose, "I suppose you may be right, but for my part fear seems a very foolish thing. Now, I don't know what it is. I mind my own business and no one ever bothers me. I should think it would be a very uncomfortable feeling."

"It is," replied Danny, "but, as I said before, it is a very good thing to keep one on guard when there are so many watching for one as there are for me. Now, there's Mr. Blacksnake and—"

"Where?" exclaimed old Mr. Toad, turning as pale as a toad can turn and looking uneasily and anxiously in every direction.

Danny turned his head to hide a smile, for if Old Mr. Toad wasn't showing fear no one ever did. "O," said he, "I didn't mean that he is anywhere around here now. What I was going to say was that there is Mr. Blacksnake and Granny Fox and Reddy Fox and Redtail the Hawk and Hooty the Owl and others I might name always watching for a chance to make a dinner from poor little me. Do you wonder that I'm afraid most of the time."

"No," replied old Mr. Toad. "No, I don't wonder that you are afraid. It must be

dreadful to feel hungry eyes are watching for you every minute of the day and night, too.”

“O, it’s not so bad,” replied Danny “It’s rather exciting. Besides, it keeps my wits sharp all the time. I am afraid I should find life very dull indeed if, like you, I feared nothing and nobody. By the way, see how queerly that grass is moving over there. It looks as if Mr. Blacksnake—why, Mr. Toad, where are you going in such a hurry?”

“I’ve just remembered an important engagement with my cousin, Grandfather Frog, at the Smiling Pool,” shouted old Mr. Toad over his shoulder as he hurried so that he fell over his own feet.

Danny chuckled as he sat alone on his doorstep. “O, no, old Mr. Toad doesn’t know what fear is!” said he. “Funny how some people won’t admit what everybody can see for themselves. Now, I am afraid, and I’m willing to say so.”

(The Adventures of Danny Meadow Mouse, Chapter 20)

STORY 508. September 29, 1913

An Exciting Day for Danny Meadow Mouse

Danny Meadow Mouse started along one of his private little paths very early one morning. He was on his way to get a supply of a certain kind of grass seed, of which he was very fond. He had been thinking about that seed for some time and waiting for it to get ripe. Now it was just right, as he had found out the day before by a visit to the place where this particular grass grew. The only trouble was, it grew a long way from Danny’s home, and to reach it he had to cross an open place where the grass was so short that he couldn’t make a path under.

“I feel it in my bones that this is going to be an exciting day,” said Danny to himself as he trotted along. “I suppose that if I was really wise, I would stay nearer home and do without that nice seed. But nothing is really worth having unless it is worth working for, and that seed will taste all the better if I have hard work getting it.”

So he trotted along his private little path with his ears wide open and his eyes wide open and his little nose carefully testing every Merry Little Breeze who happened along for any scent of danger which it might carry. Most of all, he depended upon his ears, for the grass was so tall that he couldn’t see over it, even when he sat up. He had gone only a little way when he thought he heard a queer rustling behind him. He stopped to listen. There it was again and it certainly was right in the path behind him.

He didn’t need to be told who was making it. There was only one who could make such a sound as that—Mr Blacksnake.

Now, Danny can run very fast along his private little paths, but he knows that Mr Blacksnake can run faster. “If my legs can’t save me my wits must,” thought Danny, as he started to run as fast as ever he could. “I must reach that fallen old hollow fence-post.”

He was almost out of breath when he reached the post and scurried into the open end, and he knew by the sound of the rustling that Mr Blacksnake was right at his heels. Now, the old post was hollow its whole length, but halfway there was an old knothole just big enough for Danny to squeeze through. Mr Blacksnake didn't know anything about that hole, and, because it was dark inside the old post, he didn't see Danny pop through it. Danny ran back along the top of the log and was just in time to see the tip of Mr Blacksnake's tail disappear inside. Then, what do you think Danny did? Why, he followed Mr Blacksnake right into the old post, but in doing it he didn't make the least little bit of noise.

Mr Blacksnake kept right on through the old post and out the other end, for he was sure that that was the way Danny had gone. He kept right on along the little path. Now, Danny knew that he wouldn't go very far before he found out that he had been fooled. Of course, he would come back. So Danny waited only long enough to get his breath and then ran back along the path he had just come, to where another little path branched off. For just a minute he paused.

"If Mr Blacksnake follows me he will be sure to think that of course I have taken this other little path," thought Danny; "so I won't do it."

Then he ran harder than ever until he came to a place where two little paths branched off, one to the right and one to the left. He took the latter and scampered on, sure that by this time Mr Blacksnake would be so badly fooled that he would give up the chase. And Danny was right.

"Brains are better far than speed,
As wise men long ago agreed,"

said Danny as he trotted on his way for the grass. "I felt it in my bones that this would be an exciting day. I wonder what next."

(The Adventures of Danny Meadow Mouse, Chapter 21)

STORY 509. September 30, 1913

What Happened Next to Danny Meadow Mouse

Danny Meadow Mouse had just had a very narrow escape from Mr. Blacksnake, but Danny is so used to narrow escapes that he doesn't waste any time thinking about them. He didn't this time. "He who tries to look two ways at once is pretty sure to see nothing," says Danny; and he knew that if he thought too much about the things that had already happened, he couldn't keep a sharp watch for the things that might happen. He had started out to get some special grass seed, of which he is very fond, and because Danny usually does whatever he starts to do he didn't allow his adventure with Mr. Blacksnake to change his plans.

Nothing more happened as he hurried along his private little path to the edge of a great patch of grass so short that he couldn't hide under it. He had got to cross this, and all the way he would be in plain sight of any one who happened to be near. Very

cautiously he peeped out and looked this way and that way, not forgetting to look up in the sky. He could see no one anywhere. Drawing a long breath, Danny started across the open place as fast as his short legs could take him.

Now, all the time Mr. Redtail the Hawk had been sitting in a tree some distance away, sitting so still that he looked like a part of the tree itself. That is why Danny hadn't seen him. But Mr Redtail saw Danny the instant he started across the open place, for Mr. Redtail's eyes are very keen and he can see a great distance. With a satisfied chuckle, he spread his broad wings and started after Danny.

Just about half way to the safety of the long grass on the other side Danny gave a hurried look behind him and his heart seemed to jump right into his mouth, for there was Mr. Redtail with his great, cruel claws already set to seize him. Danny gave a frightened squeak, for he thought that surely this time he would be caught. But he didn't mean to give up without trying to escape. Three jumps ahead of him was a queer-looking thing. He didn't know what it was, but if there was a hole in it, he might yet fool Mr. Redtail.

One jump! Would he be able to reach it? Two jumps! There was a hole in it! Three jumps! With another frightened squeak, Danny dived into the opening just in time. And what do you think he was in? Why? an old tomato can Farmer Brown's boy had once used to carry bait in when he went fishing at the Smiling Pool! He had dropped it there on his way home.

Mr. Redtail screamed with rage and disappointment as he struck the old can with his great claws. He had been sure, so very sure of Danny Meadow Mouse this time! He tried to pick the can up, but he couldn't get hold of it. It just rolled away from him every time, try as he would. Finally, in disgust, he gave up and flew back to the tree, from which he had first seen Danny.

Of course, Danny had been terribly frightened when the can rolled and by the noise of the claws of Mr. Redtail made when they struck his queer hiding place. But he wisely decided that the best thing he could do was to stay there for a while. And it is very fortunate that he did so, as he was very soon to find out.

(The Adventures of Danny Meadow Mouse, Chapter 22)

STORY 510. October 1, 1913

Reddy Fox is Very Curious

Danny Meadow Mouse had kept perfectly still for a long time inside the old tomato can in which he had found refuge from Redtail the Hawk. He didn't dare so much as put his head out for a look around, lest Redtail should be circling overhead, ready to pounce on him.

"If I stay here long enough, he'll get tired and go away, if he hasn't already," thought Danny. "This has been a pretty exciting morning so far and I find that I am a little tired. I may as well take a nap while I am waiting to make sure that the way is

clear.”

With that Danny curled up for a nap in the old tomato can. But it wasn't meant that Danny should have that nap. He had closed his eyes, but his ears were still open and presently he heard soft footsteps drawing near. His eyes flew open and he forgot all about sleep, you may be sure, for those footsteps sounded familiar. They sounded to Danny very, very much like the footsteps of— whom do you think? Why, Reddy Fox! Danny's heart began to beat faster as he listened. Could it be? He didn't dare to peep out. Presently a little whiff of scent blew into the old tomato can. Then Danny knew. It WAS Reddy Fox.

“O, dear! I hope he doesn't find out that I am in here!” thought Danny. “I wonder what under the sun has brought him up here just now?”

If the truth were to be known it was curiosity that had brought Reddy up there. Reddy had been hunting for his breakfast some distance away, on the Green Meadows, when Redtail the Hawk had tried so hard to catch Danny Meadow Mouse. Reddy's sharp eyes had seen Redtail the minute he left the tree in pursuit of Danny and he had known by the way Redtail flew that he saw something he wanted to catch. He had watched Redtail swoop down and had heard his scream of rage when he missed Danny, because Danny had dodged into the old tomato can. He had seen Redtail strike and strike again at something on the ground and finally fly off in disgust with empty claws.

“Now I wonder what it was Redtail was after and why he didn't get it,” thought Reddy. “He acts terribly put out and disappointed. I believe I'll go over there and find out.”

To make up his mind is to act without waste of time with Reddy Fox, and off he started at a smart trot toward the patch of short grass where he had seen Redtail the Hawk striking at something on the ground. As he drew near, he crept very softly until he reached the very edge of the open patch. There he stopped and looked sharply all over it. There was nothing to be seen but an old tomato can dropped there by Farmer Brown's boy on his way home from fishing in the Smiling Pool a long time before. Reddy had seen the old can many times before.

“Now, what under the sun could Redtail have been after here?” thought Reddy. “The grass isn't long enough for a grasshopper to hide in, and yet Redtail didn't get what he was after. It's very queer. It certainly is very queer.”

He trotted out on to the patch of short grass and began to run back and forth with his nose to the ground, hoping that his nose would tell him what his eyes couldn't. Back and forth, back and forth, he ran and then suddenly he stopped.

“Ha!” exclaimed Reddy. He had found the scent left by Danny Meadow Mouse when he ran across toward the old tomato can. Right up to the old can Reddy's nose led him. He hopped over the old can, but on the other side he could find no scent of Danny Meadow Mouse. In a flash he understood and a gleam of satisfaction shone in his yellow eyes as he turned back to the old can. He knew that Danny must be hiding in there.

“I’ve got you this time!” he snarled, as he sniffed at the opening in the end of the can.

(*The Adventures of Danny Meadow Mouse*, Chapter 23, “Reddy Fox Grows Curious”)

STORY 511. October 2, 1913

Reddy Fox Loses his Temper

Reddy Fox had caught Danny Meadow Mouse and yet he hadn’t caught him. He had found Danny hiding in an old tomato can and it and it didn’t enter Reddy’s head that he couldn’t get Danny out when he wanted to. He was in no hurry. He had had a pretty good breakfast of grasshoppers, and so he thought he would torment Danny a while before gobbling him up. He lay down so that he could peep in at the open end of the old can and see Danny trying to make himself as small as possible at the other end. Reddy grinned until he showed all his long teeth. Reddy always is a bully, especially when his victim is a great deal smaller and weaker than himself.

“I’ve got you this time, Mr. Smarty, haven’t I?” taunted Reddy.

Danny didn’t say anything.

“You think you’ve been very clever because you have fooled me two or three times, don’t you? Well, this time I’ve got you where your tricks won’t work,” continued Reddy. “So, what are you going to do about it?”

Danny didn’t answer. The fact is, he was too frightened to answer. Besides, he didn’t know what he could do. So he just kept still but his bright eyes never once left Reddy’s cruel face. For all his fright Danny was doing some hard thinking. He had been in tight places before and had learned never to give up hope. Something might happen to frighten Reddy away. Anyway, Reddy had to get him out of that old can before he would admit that he was really caught.

For a long time Reddy lay there licking his chops and saying all the things he could think of to frighten poor Danny Meadow Mouse. At last, he grew tired of this and made up his mind that it was time to end it and Danny Meadow Mouse at the same time. He thrust his sharp nose in at the opening in the end of the old can, but the opening was too small for him to get more than his nose in, and he only scratched it on the sharp edges without so much as touching Danny.

“I’ll pull him out,” said Reddy, and he thrust in one black paw.

Danny promptly bit it so hard that Reddy yelped with pain and pulled it out in a hurry. Presently he tried again with the other paw. Danny bit this one harder still, and Reddy danced with pain and anger. Then he lost his temper completely, a very foolish thing to do, as it always is. He hit the old can and away it rolled with Danny Meadow Mouse inside. This seemed to make Reddy angrier than ever. He sprang after it and hit it again. Then he batted it first this way and then that way, growing angrier and angrier. And all the time Danny Meadow Mouse managed to keep inside, although he got a

terrible shaking up.

Back and forth, across the patch of short grass, Reddy knocked the old can and he was in such a rage that he didn't notice where he was knocking it to. Finally, he sent it spinning into the long grass on the far side of the open patch close to one of Danny's private little paths. Like a flash Danny was out and scurrying along the little path. He dodged into another and presently into a third, which brought him to a tangle of barbed wire, left there by Farmer Brown when he had built a new fence. Under this he was safe.

"Phew!" exclaimed Danny, breathing hard, "That was the narrowest escape of all! I guess I'll get that special grass seed I started out for after all."

And he did, while to this day Reddy Fox wonders how Danny got out of the old tomato can without him knowing it.

And so you see what temper does
For those who give it rein;
It cheats them of the very thing
They seek so hard to gain.

(The Adventures of Danny Meadow Mouse, Chapter 24)

STORY 512. October 3, 1913

Grandfather Frog Falls Asleep

Grandfather Frog, sitting on his big, green lily pad, was feeling very good, very good indeed. He couldn't remember when he had felt better. You know, there is nothing like a full stomach to make one feel good, and Grandfather Frog's stomach was full. You see, the Merry Little Breezes of Old Mother West Wind had danced over to the Smiling Pool very early that morning and they had blown foolish green flies over to Grandfather Frog so fast that he would hardly get one tucked out of sight inside his white and yellow waistcoat before another would be right in front of his nose.

So Grandfather Frog had eaten foolish green flies until he just couldn't find room for another one. Indeed, the legs of the last one were still sticking out of one corner of his great mouth when the Merry Little Breezes bade him goodby and raced away across the Green Meadows to do a good turn for somebody else. He hadn't forgotten to thank them. Of course not. Grandfather Frog never forgets to be polite, for he is very old and very wise, and long ago he learned that good manners cost nothing, while at the same time they make a great many friends.

Mr. Redwing sat on the very top of the tallest bulrush and sang the sweetest songs to Mrs. Redwing sitting on four wonderful eggs in the nest which they had so carefully hidden in a great clump of cattails. Grandfather Frog sat listening, his hands folded across his white and yellow waistcoat. He is very fond of Mr Redwing's song and never tires of it.

Tra-la-la-la-lee! Tra-la-la-la-lee!

Never was there any one happier than me!
My mate is on the nest
And you can guess the rest—
Just why it is I sing all day this little song to thee.
Tra-la-la-la-lee! Tra-la-la-la-lee!

So sang Mr. Redwing and it seemed as if he would fairly split his throat in his efforts to pour out his happiness. Grandfather Frog nodded his head in approval. He is a great believer in happiness, is Grandfather Frog. Presently, as he listened, he began to dream of the days when the world was young. It was a very pleasant dream. He still nodded his head, but he didn't know it. Jolly, round, red Mr. Sun, looking down, smiled and poured his warmest rays on Grandfather Frog's broad back. His eyes closed, opened again, closed, opened once more and then closed and stayed closed. Grandfather Frog was asleep.

Now, someone else had been watching Grandfather Frog and had chuckled to himself as he watched him nod and nod. When he saw that Grandfather Frog was really asleep, he crept out of his hiding place on the edge of the Smiling Pool and he was grinning broadly. It was Billy Mink.

"Grandfather Frog may be wise, as everybody says, but even the wise are foolish sometimes," said Billy to himself. "Now, Grandfather Frog ought to know better than to go to sleep right out in plain sight. Yes, sir, he certainly ought to. He is very fond of giving advice to other people and teaching them lessons, and now I think it is my duty to teach him one. I really do."

Billy Mink's eyes twinkled with mischief as he started off to hunt up Little Joe Otter. The truth is, Billy Mink hadn't forgotten how Grandfather Frog had once made him the laughing stock of all the little people of the Smiling Pool and the Green Meadows⁴⁴, and now he saw a chance to get even.

STORY 513. October 4, 1913

Billy Mink Finds Little Joe Otter

Billy Mink ran around the edge of the Smiling Pool on his way to the Laughing Brook. His eyes twinkled with mischief and he hurried as only Billy can. As he passed Jerry Muskrat's house Jerry saw him.

"Hi, Billy Mink! Where are you going in such a hurry this fine morning?" he called.

"To find Little Joe Otter. Have you seen anything of him?" replied Billy.

"No," said Jerry. "He's probably gone down to the Big River fishing. I heard him say last night that he was going."

"Thanks," said Billy Mink, and without waiting to say more he was off like a little brown flash.

44 STORY 165, 1912.

Illustrations. September 29 to October 4, 1913.



508. An Exciting Day for Danny Meadow Mouse
Mr. Blacksake kept right on through the old post.



509. What Happened Next to Danny Meadow Mouse
Drawing a long breath, Danny started across the open space as fast as his short legs could carry him.



510. Reddy Fox is Very Curious
"O, dear! I hope he doesn't find out I am here," thought Danny.



511. Reddy Fox Loses his Temper
"I've got you this time, Mr. Smarty, haven't I?" said Reddy.



512. Grandfather Frog Falls Asleep
Grandfather Frog, sitting on his green lily pad, was feeling very good.



513. Billy Mink Finds Little Joe Otters
"Have a nice nap?" inquired Jerry with a broad grin.

Jerry watched him out of sight. "Humph!" exclaimed Jerry. "Billy Mink is in a terrible hurry this morning. Now I wonder why he is so anxious to find Little Joe Otter. When they get their heads together it is usually for some mischief."

Jerry climbed to the top of his house and looked over the Smiling Pool in the direction from which Billy Mink had just come. Almost at once he saw Grandfather Frog fast asleep on his big green lily-pad. The legs of a foolish green fly were sticking out of one corner of his big mouth. Jerry couldn't help laughing, for Grandfather Frog certainly did look funny.

"He's had a good breakfast this morning, and his full stomach has made him sleepy," thought Jerry. "But he's getting careless in his old age. He certainly is getting careless. The idea of going to sleep right out in plain sight like that!"

Suddenly a new thought popped into his head. "Billy Mink saw him, and that is why he is so anxious to find Little Joe Otter. He is planning to play some trick on Grandfather Frog as sure as pollywogs have tails!" exclaimed Jerry.

Then his own eyes began to twinkle as he added: "I think I'll have some fun myself." Without another word Jerry slipped down into the water and swam over to the big green lily-pad of Grandfather Frog. Then he hit the water a smart blow with his tail. Grandfather Frog's big, goggly eyes flew open and he was just about to make a frightened plunge into the Smiling Pool when he saw Jerry.

"Have a nice nap?" inquired Jerry, with a broad grin.

"I wasn't asleep!" protested Grandfather Frog indignantly. "I was just thinking."

"Don't you think it a rather dangerous plan to think so long with your eyes closed?" asked Jerry.

"Well, maybe I did just doze off," admitted Grandfather Frog sheepishly.

"Maybe you did," replied Jerry. "Now, listen. Then Jerry whispered in Grandfather Frog's ear, and both chuckled as if they were enjoying some joke, for they are great friends, you know. Afterward Jerry swam back to his house and Grandfather Frog closed his eyes so as to look just as he did when he was asleep.

Meanwhile Billy Mink had hurried down the Laughing Brook. Half-way to the Big River he met Little Joe Otter bringing home a big fish, for, you know, Little Joe is a great fisherman: Billy Mink hurried to tell him how Grandfather Frog had fallen fast asleep on his big green lily-pad.

"It's a splendid chance to have some fun with Grandfather Frog and give him a great scare," concluded Billy.

Little Joe Otter put his fish down and grinned. He likes to play pranks almost as well as he likes to go fishing.

"What can we do?" said he.

"I've thought of a plan," replied Billy. "Do you happen to know where we can find Longlegs the Blue Heron?"

“Yes,” said Little Joe. “I saw him fishing not five minutes ago.”

Then Billy told Little Joe his plan, and, laughing and giggling, the two little scamps hurried off to find Longlegs the Blue Heron.

(The Adventures of Grandfather Frog, Chapter 1)

STORY 514. October 6, 1913

Longlegs, the Blue Heron, Receives Callers

Longlegs, the Blue Heron, felt decidedly out of sorts. It was a beautiful morning, too beautiful for any one to be feeling that way. Indeed it was the same beautiful morning in which Grandfather Frog had caught so many foolish green flies that he had stuffed his white and yellow waistcoat until he couldn't get another one in, and had then gone to sleep right out in plain sight on his big green lily-pad in the Smiling Pool. It was the very same morning that Little Joe Otter had gone down to the Big River fishing and had had such success that he was fairly bubbling with good feeling.

Jolly, round, red Mr. Sun was smiling his broadest. The Merry Little Breezes of Old Mother West Wind were dancing happily here and there over the Green Meadows, looking for some good turn to do for others. The little feathered people, to whom Old Mother Nature has given the great blessing of music in their throats, were pouring out their sweetest songs. So it seemed as if there was no good reason why Longlegs should feel out of sorts. The fact is, the trouble with Longlegs was an empty stomach. Yes, sir, that is what ailed Longlegs, the Blue Heron, that sunshiny morning. You know it is hard work to be hungry and happy at the same time.

So Longlegs stood on the edge of a shallow little pool in the Laughing Brook grumbling to himself. Just a little while before he had seen Little Joe Otter carrying home a big fish and this had made him hungrier and more out of sorts than ever. In the first place it made him envious, and envy, you know, always stirs up bad feelings. He knew perfectly well that Little Joe had caught that fish by boldly chasing it, for Little Joe can swim even faster than a fish. But Longlegs chose to try to make himself think that it was all luck. Moreover, he wanted to blame some one for his own lack of success, as most people who fail do. So when Little Joe had called out, “Hi, Longlegs, what luck this fine morning?” Longlegs just pretended not to hear. But when Little Joe was out of sight and hearing, he began to grumble to himself.

“No wonder I have no luck with that fellow racing up and down the brook,” said he. “He isn't content to catch what he wants himself, but frightens the rest of the fish so that an honest fisherman like me has no chance at all. I don't see what Old Mother Nature was thinking of when she gave him a liking for fish. He and Billy Mink are just two worthless little scamps, born to make trouble for other people.”

He was still grumbling when these two same little scamps poked their heads out of the grass on the other side of the little pool. “You look happy, Longlegs. Must be that you have had a good breakfast,” said Little Joe, nudging Billy Mink.

Longlegs snapped his great bill angrily. "What are you doing here spoiling my fishing?" he demanded. "Haven't you got the Big River and all the rest of the Laughing Brook to fool around in? This is my pool and I'll thank you to keep away!"

Billy Mink chuckled so that Longlegs heard him and that didn't improve his temper a bit. But before he could say anything more Little Joe Otter spoke.

"O," said he, "we beg your pardon. Billy Mink just happened to see Grandfather Frog sound asleep and we thought that if you hadn't had good luck this morning you might like to know about it. But as long as you think so ill of us, we'll just run over and tell Blackcap the Night Heron."

Little Joe turned as if to start off in search of Blackcap at once. "Hold on a minute!" called Longlegs and tried to make his voice sound pleasant, a very difficult thing to do, because you know, his voice is very harsh and disagreeable. "The truth is I haven't had a mouthful of breakfast and to be hungry is apt to make me cross. Where did you say Grandfather Frog is?"

"I didn't say," replied Little Joe. "But if you really want to know he is sitting on his big, green, lily-pad in the Smiling Pool, fast asleep right in plain sight."

"Thank you," said Longlegs. "I believe I have an errand up that way now I think of it. I believe I'll just go over and have a look at him. I have never seen him asleep."

(The Adventures of Grandfather Frog, Chapter 2)

STORY 515. October 7, 1913

Longlegs Visits the Smiling Pool

Longlegs the Blue Heron watched Billy Mink and Little Joe Otter disappear down the Laughing Brook. As long as they were in sight, he sat without moving, his head drawn down between his shoulders just as if he had nothing more important to think about than a morning nap. But if you had been near enough to have seen his keen eyes you would never have suspected him of even thinking of a nap. Just as soon as he felt sure that the two little brown-coated scamps were out of sight he stretched his long neck up until he was almost twice as tall as he had been a minute before. He looked this way and that way to make sure that no danger was near, spread his great wings, flapped heavily up into the air, and then, with his head once more tucked back between his shoulders and his long legs straight out behind him, he flew out over the Green Meadows and making a big circle, headed straight for the Smiling Pool.

All this time Billy Mink and Little Joe Otter had not been so far away as Longlegs supposed. They had been hiding where they could watch him, and the instant he spread his wings they started back up the Laughing Brook toward the Smiling Pool to see what would happen there. You see they had told Longlegs that Grandfather Frog was fast asleep on his big green lily-pad and they knew perfectly well that Longlegs was flying up to the Smiling Pool in the hope that he could catch Grandfather Frog for his breakfast. They didn't really mean that any harm should come to Grandfather Frog, but

they meant that he should have a great fright. You see they were like a great many other people, so heedless and thoughtless that they thought it fun to frighten others.

“Of course we’ll waken Grandfather Frog in time for him to get away with nothing more than a great scare,” said Little Joe Otter as they hurried along. “It will be such fun to see his big goggly eyes pop out when he opens them and sees Longlegs just about to gobble him up! And won’t Longlegs be hopping mad when we cheat him out of the breakfast he will be so sure he is going to have!”

They reached the Smiling Pool before Longlegs, who had taken a roundabout way, and they hid among the bullrushes where they could see him and not be seen.

“There’s the old fellow just as I left him, fast asleep,” whispered Billy Mink.

Sure enough, there on his big green lily-pad sat Grandfather Frog with his eyes shut. At least they seemed to be shut. And over on top of his big house, sat Jerry Muskrat. Jerry seemed to be too busy opening a fresh-water clam to notice anything else, but the truth is he was watching all that was going on. You see, he had suspected that Billy Mink was up to some mischief that morning and he had guessed that he was going to play some trick on Grandfather Frog. So he had warned him. When he had seen Longlegs coming toward the Smiling Pool he had given Grandfather Frog another warning, and he knew that now he was only pretending to be asleep.

Straight up to the Smiling Pool came Longlegs the Blue Heron and on the very edge of it, among the bullrushes, he dropped his long legs and stood with his toes in the water, his long neck stretched up so that he could look all over the Smiling Pool. There, just as Little Joe Otter had said, sat Grandfather Frog on his big, green lily-pad fast asleep. At least he seemed to be fast asleep. The eyes of Longlegs sparkled with hunger and the thought of what a splendid breakfast Grandfather Frog would make. Very slowly, putting each foot down as carefully as he knew how, Longlegs began to walk along the shore so as to get opposite the big green lily-pad where Grandfather Frog was sitting. And over in the bullrushes on the other side Little Joe Otter and Billy Mink nudged each other, and clapped their hands over their mouths to keep from laughing aloud.

(The Adventures of Grandfather Frog, Chapter 3)

STORY 516. October 8, 1913

The Patience of Longlegs, the Blue Heron

Patience often wins the day
When over-haste has lost the way.

If there is one virtue which Longlegs the Heron possesses above another it is patience. Yes, sir, Longlegs certainly has got patience. He believes that if a thing is worth having it is worth waiting for, and that if he waits long enough, he is sure to get it. Perhaps that is because he has been a fisherman all his life, and his father and his grandfather were fishermen. You know a fisherman without patience rarely catches

anything. Of course, Billy Mink and Little Joe Otter laugh at this and say that it isn't so, but the truth is they sometimes go hungry when they wouldn't if they had a little of the patience of Longlegs.

Now, Grandfather Frog is another who is very, very patient. He can sit still the longest time waiting for something to come to him. Indeed, he can sit perfectly still so long, and Longlegs I can stand perfectly still so long that Jerry Muskrat and Billy Mink and Little Joe Otter have had many long disputes as to which of the two can keep still the longest.

Longlegs had come over to the Smiling Pool because Little Joe Otter and Billy Mink had told him that Grandfather Frog was sitting on his big green lily-pad fast asleep.

"He will make a splendid breakfast," thought Longlegs as very, very carefully he walked along the edge of the Smiling Pool so as to get right opposite Grandfather Frog. There he stopped and looked very hard at Grandfather Frog. Yes, he certainly must be asleep, for his eyes were closed. Longlegs chuckled to himself right down inside without making a sound, and got ready to wade out so as to get within reach.

Now, all the time Grandfather Frog was doing some quiet chuckling himself. You see, he wasn't asleep at all, for Jerry Muskrat had warned him. He was just pretending to be asleep, and all the time he was watching Longlegs out of a corner of one of his big, goggly eyes. Very, very slowly and carefully, so as not to make the teeniest, weeniest sound, Longlegs lifted one foot to wade out into the Smiling Pool. Grandfather Frog pretended to yawn and opened his big, goggly eyes. Longlegs stood on one foot without moving so much as a feather. Grandfather Frog yawned again, nodded as if he was too sleepy to keep awake, and half closed his eyes. Longlegs waited and waited. Then, little by little, so slowly that if you had been there you would hardly have seen him move, he drew his long neck down until his head rested on his shoulders.

"I guess I must wait until he falls sound asleep again," said Longlegs to himself.

But Grandfather Frog didn't go to sleep. He would nod and nod and then, just when Longlegs would make up his mind that this time, he was really asleep, open would pop Grandfather Frog's eyes. So all the long morning Longlegs stood on one foot without moving, watching and waiting and growing hungrier and hungrier, and all the long morning Grandfather Frog sat on his big, green lily-pad, pretending that he was, oh, so sleepy, and all the time having such a comfortable sunbath and rest, for very early he had had such a good breakfast of foolish green flies.

Over in the bulrushes on the other side of the Smiling Pool two little scamps in brown bathing suits had waited and watched for the great fright they had planned for Grandfather Frog when they had sent Longlegs to try to catch him. They were Billy Mink and Little Joe Otter. At first they laughed to themselves and nudged each other

at the thought of the trick they had played. Then, as nothing happened, they began to grow tired and uneasy. You see, they do not possess patience. Finally they gave up in disgust and stole away to find some more exciting sport. Grandfather Frog saw them go and chuckled harder than ever to himself.

(The Adventures of Grandfather Frog, Chapter 4)

STORY 517. October 9, 1913

Grandfather Frog Jumps Just in Time

Back and forth over the Green Meadows sailed Whitetail the Marshhawk. Like Longlegs the Blue Heron he was hungry. His sharp eyes peered down among the grasses looking for something to eat. But some good fairy seemed to have warned the very little people who live there that Whitetail was out hunting. Perhaps it was one of the Old Mother West Wind's children, the Merry Little Breezes. You know they are always flitting about trying to do some one a good turn.

They love to dance and romp and play
From dawn to dusk the livelong day,
But more than this they love to find
A chance to do some favor kind.

Anyway, little Mr. Green Snake seemed to know that Whitetail was out hunting and managed to keep out of sight. Danny Meadow Mouse wasn't to be found. Only a few foolish grasshoppers rewarded his patient search, and those only served to make him feel hungrier than ever. But old Whitetail has a great deal of persistence, and in spite of his bad luck he kept at his hunting, back and forth, back and forth, until he had been all over the Green Meadows. At last he made up his mind that he was wasting time there.

"I'll just have a look over at the Smiling Pool and if there is nothing there, I'll take a turn or two along the Big River," thought he, and straightway started for the Smiling Pool. Long before he reached it his keen eyes saw Longlegs the Blue Heron standing motionless on the edge of it, and he knew by the looks of Longlegs that he was watching something which he hoped to catch.

"If it's a fish," thought Whitetail. "It will do me no good, for I am no fisherman. But if it's a frog—well, frogs are not as good eating as fat meadow mice, but they are very filling."

With that he hurried a little faster, and then he saw what Longlegs was watching so intently. It was Grandfather Frog sitting on his big green lily-pad. Old Whitetail gave a great sigh of satisfaction, Grandfather Frog certainly would be very filling, very filling, indeed.

Now, Longlegs the Blue Heron was so intently watching Grandfather Frog that he saw nothing else, and Grandfather Frog was so busy watching Longlegs that he quite forgot that there might be other dangers. Besides, he was back to old Whitetail. Of

course Whitetail saw this, and it made him almost chuckle aloud. Ever so many times he had tried to catch Grandfather Frog, but always Grandfather Frog had seen him long before he could get near him.

Now, with all his keen sight old Whitetail had failed to see some one else who was sitting right in plain sight. He had failed because his mind was so full of Grandfather Frog and Longlegs that he forgot to look around as he usually does. Just skimming the tops of the bulrushes he sailed swiftly out over the Smiling Pool and reached down with his great cruel claws to clutch Grandfather Frog. There he sat pretending to be asleep, but all the time watching Longlegs and deep down inside chuckling to think how he was fooling Longlegs and all ready to jump the minute Longlegs tried to get nearer. Just a teeny, weeny second more and the Smiling Pool would never again see Grandfather Frog.

Slap! That was the tail of Jerry Muskrat hitting the water. Grandfather Frog knew what that meant—danger. He didn't know what the danger was and he didn't wait to find out. There would be time enough for that later. When Jerry Muskrat slapped the water with his tail that way danger was very near, indeed. With a frightened “chug-arum!” Grandfather Frog dived headfirst into the Smiling Pool, and so close was old Whitetail that the water was splashed right in his face. He clutched frantically with his great claws, but all he got was a piece of the big green lily-pad on which Grandfather Frog had been sitting, and, of course, this was of no use for an empty stomach.

With a scream of disappointment and anger, he whirled in the air and made straight for Jerry Muskrat. But Jerry just laughed in the most provoking way and ducked under water.

(The Adventures of Grandfather Frog, Chapter 5)

STORY 518. October 10, 1913

Longlegs and Whitetail Quarrel

“You did!” “I didn’t! I didn’t!” “You did!”
Such a terrible fuss when Grandfather hid!

You see, Longlegs, the Blue Heron, had patiently stood on one foot all the long morning, waiting for Grandfather Frog to go to sleep on his big green lily pad. He had meant to have Grandfather Frog for his breakfast and lunch, for he had had no breakfast and it was now lunch time. He was so hungry that it seemed to him that the sides of his stomach certainly would fall in because there was nothing to hold them up. But Longlegs has patience, a very great deal of patience, and so he had stood and stood and stood and stood, all the time on one foot.

Then, without any warning at all, old Whitetail, the Marsh Hawk, had glided out across the Smiling Pool with his great claws stretched out to clutch Grandfather Frog. With a slap of his tail on the water Jerry Muskrat had warned Grandfather Frog, who had dived into the Smiling Pool with a great splash just in the very nick of time.

Now is there anything in the world so hard on the temper as to lose a good meal when you are very, very, very hungry? Of course, Longlegs didn't really have that good meal, but he had thought, that he was surely going to have it. So when Grandfather Frog splashed into the Smiling Pool of course Longlegs lost his temper altogether. His yellow eyes seemed to grow even more yellow.

"You robber! You thief!" he screamed harshly at old Whitetail.

Now old Whitetail was just as hungry as Longlegs, and he had come even nearer to catching Grandfather Frog. He is even quicker tempered than Longlegs. He had whirled like a flash on Jerry Muskrat, but Jerry had just laughed in the most provoking manner and ducked under water. This had made old Whitetail angrier than ever, and then to be called bad names—robber and thief! It was more than any self-respecting hawk could stand. Yes, sir, it certainly was! He fairly shook with rage as he turned in the air once more and made straight for Longlegs, the Blue Heron.

"I'm no more robber and thief than you are!" he shrieked.

"You frightened away my frog!" screamed Longlegs.

"I didn't!"

"You did!"

"I didn't! It wasn't your frog. It was mine!"

"Chugrum" said Grandfather Frog to Jerry Muskrat as they peeped out from under some lily-pads, "I didn't know I belonged to anybody. I really didn't. Did you?"

"No," replied Jerry, his eyes sparkling with excitement as he watched Longlegs and Whitetail. "It's news to me."

"You're too lazy to hunt like honest people!" taunted old Whitetail, as he wheeled around Longlegs, watching for a chance to strike with his great, cruel claws.

"I'm too honest to take the food out of other people's mouths!" retorted Longlegs, dancing around so as always to face Whitetail, one of his great, broad wings held in front of him like a shield, and his long strong yellow bill ready to strike.

Every feather on Whitetail's head was standing erect with rage, and he looked very fierce and terrible. At last he saw a chance, or thought he did, and shot down. But all he got was a feather from that great wing which Longlegs kept in front of him, and before he could get away that long yellow bill had struck him twice so that he screamed with pain. So they fought and fought till the ground was covered with feathers, and they were too tired to fight any longer. Then slowly and painfully old Whitetail flew away over the Green Meadows, and with torn and ragged wings Longlegs flew heavily down the Laughing Brook toward the Big River, and both were sore and stiff, and still hungry.

"Dear me! Dear me! What a terrible thing and how useless anger is," said Grandfather Frog, as he climbed back on his big green lily-pad in the warm sunshine.

(The Adventures of Grandfather Frog, Chapter 6)

Illustrations. October 6 to October 11, 1913.



514. Longlegs, the Blue Heron, Receives Callers
The trouble with Longlegs was an empty stomach.



515. Longlegs Visits the Smiling Pool
"There's the old fellow just as I left him, fast asleep," said Billy Mink.



516. The Patience of Longlegs, the Blue Heron
"He will make a splendid breakfast," thought Longlegs.



517. Grandfather Frog Jumps Just in Time
With a frightened "Chugarum," Grandfather Frog dived.



518. Longlegs and Whitetail Quarrel
"You robber! You thief!" he screamed.



519. Grandfather Frog's Big Mouth Gets Him in Trouble
"Those certainly are very nice fish, very nice fish."

Grandfather Frog's Big Mouth Gets Him in Trouble

Grandfather Frog has a great big mouth. You know that. Everybody does. His friends of the Smiling Pool, the Laughing Brook and the Green Meadows have teased Grandfather Frog a great deal about the size of his mouth, but he hasn't minded in the least, not the very least. You see he learned a long time ago that a big mouth is very handy for catching foolish green flies, especially when two happen to come along together. So he is rather proud of his big mouth, just as he is of his great goggly eyes.

But once in a while his big mouth gets him into trouble. It's a way big mouths have. It holds so much that it makes him greedy sometimes. He stuffs it full after his stomach already has had all that it can hold, and then, of course, he can't swallow. Then Grandfather Frog looks very foolish and silly and undignified, and everybody calls him a greedy old fellow who is old enough to know better, and ought to be ashamed of himself. Perhaps he is, but he never says so, and he is almost sure to do the same thing over again the first chance he has.

Now, it happened one morning that Grandfather Frog had had a very good breakfast of foolish green flies, and really didn't need another single thing to eat, when who should come along but Little Joe Otter, who had been down to the Big River fishing. He had eaten all he could hold, and he was taking the rest of his catch to his secret hiding place up the Laughing Brook.

Now, Grandfather Frog is very fond of fish for a change, and when he saw those that Little Joe Otter had his eyes glistened, and, in spite of his full stomach, his mouth watered.

"Good morning. Grandfather Frog! Have you had your breakfast yet?" called Little Joe.

Grandfather Frog wanted to say no, but he always tells the truth. "Y-e-s," he replied hesitatingly. "I've had my breakfast, such as it was. Why do you ask?"

"Oh, for no reason in particular. I just thought that if you hadn't you might like a fish. But as long as you have breakfasted of course you don't want one," said Little Joe, his bright eyes beginning to twinkle. He held the fish out so that Grandfather Frog could see just how plump and nice they were.

"Chugarum!" exclaimed Grandfather Frog. "Those certainly are very nice fish, very nice fish indeed. It is very good of you to think of a poor old fellow like me, and I—er—well, I might find room for just a little teeny, weeny one, if you can spare it."

Little Joe Otter knows all about Grandfather Frog's greediness. He looked at Grandfather Frog's white and yellow waistcoat and saw how it was already stuffed full to bursting. The twinkle in his eyes grew more mischievous than ever as he said: "Of course I can spare it. But I wouldn't think of giving such an old friend a teeny, weeny one."

With that Little Joe picked out the biggest fish he had and tossed it over to Grandfather Frog. It landed close by his nose with a great splash and it was almost half as big as Grandfather Frog himself. It was plump and looked so tempting that Grandfather Frog forgot all about his full stomach. He even forgot to be polite and thank Little Joe Otter. He just opened his great mouth and seized the fish. Yes, sir, that is just what he did. Almost before you could wink an eye the fish had started down Grandfather Frog's throat head first.

Now you know Grandfather Frog has no teeth, and so he cannot bite things in two. He has to swallow them whole. That is just what he started to do with the fish. It went all right until the head reached his stomach. But you can't put anything more into a thing already full, and Grandfather Frog's stomach was packed as full as it could be of foolish green flies. There the fish stuck, and gulp and swallow as hard as he could, Grandfather Frog couldn't make that fish go a bit farther. Then he tried to get it out again, but it had gone so far down his throat that he couldn't get it back. Grandfather Frog began to choke.

(The Adventures of Grandfather Frog, Chapter 7)

STORY 520. October 13, 1913

Spotty the Turtle Plays a Doctor

Greed's a dreadful thing to see,
As everybody will agree.

At first Little Joe Otter, sitting on the bank of the Smiling Pool, laughed himself almost, sick as he watched Grandfather Frog trying to swallow a fish almost as big as himself when his white and yellow waistcoat was already stuffed so full of foolish green flies that there wasn't room for anything more. Such greed would have been disgusting if it hadn't been so very, very funny. At least it was funny at first.

You see, the fish had gone down Grandfather Frog's big throat head first until it reached his stomach, but then it couldn't go a bit farther, because his stomach was already full. Right there the fish had stuck, the tail still sticking out of Grandfather Frog's big mouth. Grandfather Frog hitched this way and hitched that way on his big green lily pad trying his best to swallow. Twice he tumbled off with a splash into the Smiling Pool. Each time he scrambled back again and rolled his great goggly eyes in silent appeal to Little Joe Otter to come to his aid.

But Little Joe was laughing so that he had to hold his sides, and he didn't understand that Grandfather Frog really was in trouble. Billy Mink and Jerry Muskrat came along and as soon as they saw Grandfather Frog they began to laugh. They just laughed and laughed and laughed until the tears came. They rolled over and over on the bank and kicked their heels from sheer enjoyment. It was the funniest thing they had seen for a long, long time.

"Did you ever see such greed?" gasped Billy Mink.

“Why don’t you pull it out and start over again?” shouted Little Joe Otter.

Now this is just what Grandfather Frog was trying to do. At least he was trying to pull the fish out. He hadn’t the least desire in the world to try swallowing it again. In fact, he felt just then as if he never, never wanted to see another fish so long as he lived. But Grandfather Frog’s hands are not made for grasping slippery things, and the tail of a fish is very slippery, indeed. He tried first with one hand, then with the other, and at last with both. It was of no use at all. He just couldn’t budge that fish. He couldn’t cough it up because it had gone too far down for that. The more he clawed at that waving tail with his hands the funnier he looked and the harder Little Joe Otter and Billy Mink and Jerry Muskrat laughed. They made such a noise that Spotty the Turtle, who had been taking a sunbath on the end of an old log, slipped into the water and started to see what it was all about.

Now Spotty the Turtle is very, very slow on land, but he is a good swimmer. He hurried now because he didn’t want to miss the fun. At first he didn’t see Grandfather Frog.

“What’s the joke?” he asked.

Little Joe Otter simply pointed at Grandfather Frog. Little Joe had laughed so much that he couldn’t even speak. Spotty looked over to the big green lily-pad and started to laugh, too. Then he saw great tears rolling down from Grandfather Frog’s eyes and heard little chokey sounds. He stopped laughing and started for Grandfather Frog as fast as he could swim. He climbed right up on the big green lily-pad and, reaching out, grabbed the end of the fishtail in his beak-like mouth. Then Spotty the Turtle settled back and pulled and Grandfather Frog settled back and pulled. Splash! Grandfather Frog had fallen backward into the Smiling Pool on one side of the big green lily-pad. Splash! Spotty the Turtle had fallen backward into the Smiling Pool on the opposite side of the green lily-pad. And the fish which had caused all the trouble lay floating on the water.

Thank you! Thank you!” gasped Grandfather Frog as he feebly crawled back on the lily-pad. “A minute more and I would have choked to death.”

“Don’t mention it,” replied Spotty the Turtle. “And—don’t be so greedy again.”

“I never, never will,” promised Grandfather Frog.

(The Adventures of Grandfather Frog, Chapter 8, “Spotty the Turtle Plays Doctor”)

STORY 521. October 14, 1913

Old Mr Toad Visits Grandfather Frog

Grandfather Frog and old Mr. Toad you are cousins. Of course, you know that without being told. Everybody does. But not everybody knows that they were born in the same place. They were. Yes, sir, they were. They were born in the Smiling Pool. Both had long tails and for a while no legs and played and swam together without ever

going on shore. In fact, when they were babies, they couldn't live out of the water. And people who saw them didn't know the difference between them and called them by the same names—tadpoles or pollywogs. But when they grew old enough to have legs and get along without tails, they parted company. Yes, sir, they parted company.

You see, it was this way: Grandfather Frog (of course he wasn't grandfather then) loved the Smiling Pool so well that he couldn't think of leaving it. He heard all about the great world and what a wonderful place it was, just the same as Mr. Toad did, but he couldn't and wouldn't believe that there could be any nicer place than the Smiling Pool, and so he made up his mind that he would live there always.

But Mr. Toad wanted to see the real World. He could hardly wait to get rid of his tail before turning his back on the Smiling Pool and starting out to see the Great World. Nothing that Grandfather Frog could say would stop him, and away he went when he was so small that he could hide under a clover leaf. Grandfather Frog didn't expect to see him again. But he did, though it wasn't for a long, long time. And when he did come back, he had grown so that Grandfather Frog hardly knew him at first. And right then and there began a dispute which they have kept up ever since. Whether it was best to go out into the Great World or remain in the home of childhood. Each was sure that what he had done was best, and each is sure of it to this day.

So, whenever old Mr. Toad visits Grandfather Frog, as he does every once in a while, they are sure to argue and argue on this same old subject. It was so on the day that Grandfather Frog had so nearly choked to death when he tried to swallow a big fish, after having already filled his stomach with foolish green flies. Old Mr. Toad had heard about it from one of the Merry Little Breezes of Old Mother West Wind and right away had started for the Smiling Pool to pay his respects to Grandfather Frog and tell him how glad he was that Spotty the Turtle had come along just in time to pull the fish out of Grandfather Frog's throat.

Now, all day long Grandfather Frog had had to listen to unpleasant remarks about his greediness. It was such a splendid chance to tease him that everybody around the Smiling Pool took advantage of it. Grandfather Frog took it good naturedly at first, but after a while it made him cross, and by the time his cousin, old Mr. Toad, arrived he was sulky and just grunted when Mr. Toad told him how glad he was to find Grandfather Frog quite recovered.

Old Mr. Toad pretended not to notice how out of sorts Grandfather Frog was, but kept right on talking.

"If you had been out in the Great World as much as I have been you would have known that Little Joe Otter wasn't giving you that fish for nothing," said he.

Grandfather Frog swelled right out with anger. "Chugarum!" he exclaimed in his deepest, gruffest voice. "Chuga-rum! Go back to your Great World and learn to mind your own affairs, Mr. Toad."

Right away old Mr. Toad began to swell with anger, too. For a whole minute he

glared at Grandfather Frog, so indignant he couldn't find his tongue.

(Edited and combined with story #522 for *The Adventures of Grandfather Frog*, Chapter 9, "Old Mr. Toad Visits Grandfather Frog")

STORY 522. October 15, 1913

Grandfather Frog and Old Mr Toad Dispute

Old Mr. Toad was indignant, very indignant. Indeed, he was so indignant that for a minute he couldn't find his tongue. You see he had made a long journey across the Green Meadows to the Smiling Pool to congratulate Grandfather Frog, who, you know, is his cousin, on having escaped choking to death by trying to swallow a fish when his stomach was already full. When he got there he found Grandfather Frog in a bad temper because all day long he had been teased and made fun of because of his foolish greed.

Very foolishly old Mr. Toad had told Grandfather Frog that if he had been out in the Great World he would have known better than to have tried to swallow that fish, and Grandfather Frog had replied that he ought to learn to mind his own affairs. When old Mr. Toad did find his voice, he said some very unpleasant things and right away began a dispute which Grandfather Frog and Mr. Toad have every time they meet—whether it is best to spend one's life in one place or go out into the Great World.

"What good are you to anybody but yourself, never seeing anything of the Great World and not knowing anything about what is going on or what other people are doing?" asked old Mr. Toad.

"I'm minding my own affairs and not meddling with things that don't concern me, as seems to be the way out in the Great World you are so fond of talking about," retorted Grandfather Frog. "Wise people know enough to be content with what they have. You've been out in the Great World ever since you could hop, and what good has it done you? Tell me that! You haven't even a decent suit of clothes to your back." Grandfather Frog patted his white and yellow waistcoat as he spoke and looked admiringly at the reflection of his handsome green coat in the Smiling Pool.

Old Mr. Toad's eyes snapped, for you know his suit is very plain and rough.

"People who do honest work for their living have no time to sit about in fine clothes admiring themselves," he replied sharply. "I've learned this much out in the Great World, that lazy people come to no good end. I know enough not to choke myself to death. I've noticed that those who sit around doing nothing are usually the greediest."

Grandfather Frog almost choked again, he was so angry. You see, old Mr. Toad's remarks were very personal, and nobody likes personal remarks when they are unpleasant, especially if they happen to be true. Old Mr Toad smiled, for he saw that he had hit Grandfather Frog's feelings in a tender place. This made Grandfather Frog angrier than ever, and he was trying his best to think of something sharp to say in reply

when Mr. Redwing, sitting in the top of the big hickory tree, shouted, “Here comes Farmer Brown’s boy!”

Grandfather Frog forgot his anger and began to look anxious. He moved about uneasily on his big green lily-pad and got ready to dive into the Smiling Pool, for he was afraid that Farmer Brown’s boy had a pocketful of stones, as he usually did have when he came over to the Smiling Pool.

Old Mr. Toad didn’t look troubled the least bit. He didn’t even look around for a hiding place. He just sat still and grinned.

“You’d better watch out or you’ll never visit the Smiling Pool again,” called Grandfather Frog.

“O,” replied old Mr. Toad. “I’m not afraid. Farmer Brown’s boy is a friend of mine. I help him in his garden. How to make friends is one of the things the Great World has taught me.”

“Chugarum!” said Grandfather Frog. “I’d have you know that—”

But what it was that he was to know old Mr. Toad never found out, for just then Grandfather Frog caught sight of Farmer Brown’s boy, and without waiting to even say goodbye, he dived into the Smiling Pool.

(Edited and combined with story #521 for *The Adventures of Grandfather Frog*, Chapter 9, “Old Mr. Toad Visits Grandfather Frog”)

STORY 523. October 16, 1913

Grandfather Frog Starts Out to See the Great World

Grandfather Frog looked very solemn as he sat on his big green lily-pad in the Smiling Pool. He looked very much as if he had something on his mind. A foolish green fly actually brushed Grandfather Frog’s nose, and he didn’t even notice it. The fact is he did have something on his mind. It had been there ever since his cousin, old Mr. Toad, had called the day before and they had quarreled as usual over the question of whether it was best never to leave home or to go out into the Great World.

Old Mr. Toad had gone out into the Great World when he was very young, while Grandfather Frog had spent his whole life in the Smiling Pool, and each was sure that his way was best.

Right in the midst of their quarrel along had come Farmer Brown’s boy. Now Grandfather Frog is afraid of Farmer Brown’s boy. He always has been afraid of him, and ever since he was big enough to jump, he has dived headfirst into the Smiling Pool as soon as Farmer Brown’s boy has come near. Perhaps that is one reason why Farmer Brown’s boy has liked to throw stones and sticks at him. Thoughtless people often seem to find pleasure in frightening others, you know. So when Farmer Brown’s boy appeared this time, Grandfather Frog stopped arguing with old Mr. Toad and with a great splash dived into the Smiling Pool and under a lily-pad. There he stayed

and watched his cousin, old Mr. Toad, grinning in the most provoking way, for he wasn't afraid of Farmer Brown's boy. In fact, he had boasted that they were friends. Grandfather Frog had thought that this was just an idle boast, but when he saw Farmer Brown's boy tickle old Mr. Toad under his chin with a straw, while Mr. Toad sat perfectly still, and seemed to enjoy it, he knew that it was true.

Grandfather Frog had not come out of his hiding place until after old Mr. Toad had gone back across the Green Meadows and Farmer Brown's boy had gone home for his supper. Then Grandfather Frog had climbed back on his big green lily-pad and had sat there half the night without once leading the chorus of the Smiling Pool with his great deep bass voice as he usually did. He was thinking, thinking very hard. And now this bright sunshiny morning he was still thinking.

The fact is Grandfather Frog was beginning to wonder if perhaps after all Mr. Toad was right. If the Great World had taught him how to make friends with Farmer Brown's boy there really must be some things worth learning there. Not for the world would Grandfather Frog have admitted to old Mr. Toad or to any one else that there was anything for him to learn, for you know he is very old and by his friends is accounted very wise. But right down in his heart he was beginning to think that perhaps there were some things which he couldn't learn in the Smiling Pool. So he sat and thought and thought. Suddenly he made up his mind.

"Chugarum!" said he. "I'll do it."

"Do what?" asked Jerry Muskrat, who happened to be swimming past.

"I'll go out and see for myself what this Great World my cousin, old Mr. Toad, is so fond of talking about, is like," replied Grandfather Frog.

"Don't you do it," advised Jerry Muskrat. "Don't you do anything so foolish as that. You're too old, much too old, Grandfather Frog, to go out into the Great World."

Now few old people like to be told that they are too old to do what they please, and Grandfather Frog is no different from others. "You just mind your own affairs, Jerry Muskrat," he retorted sharply. "I guess I know what is best for me without being told. If my cousin, old Mr. Toad, can take care of himself out in the Great World, I can. He isn't half so spry as I am. I'm going and that is all there is about it!"

With that Grandfather Frog dived into the Smiling Pool, swam across to a place where the bank was low, and without once looking back started across the Green Meadows to see the Great World.

(The Adventures of Grandfather Frog, Chapter 10)

STORY 524. October 17, 1913

Old Grandfather Frog is Stubborn

"Fee, fi, fo, fum!

Chug, chug, chugarum!"

Grandfather Frog actually had started out to see the Great World. Yes, sir, he had turned his back on the Smiling Pool, and nothing that Jerry Muskrat could say made the least bit of difference. Jerry had told him that he was foolish; that he was too old to go out into the Great World. But Grandfather Frog had made up his mind, and when he does that it is just a waste of time and breath for any one to try to make him change it. You see, Grandfather Frog is stubborn. Yes, that is just the word—stubborn. He would see for himself what this Great World was that his cousin, old Mr. Toad, talked so much about and said was so much better than the Smiling Pool where Grandfather Frog had spent his whole life.

“If old Mr Toad can take care of himself I can take care of myself out in the Great World,” said Grandfather Frog, talking to himself as with great jumps he started out on to the Green Meadows. “I guess he isn’t any smarter than I am. He isn’t half so spry as I am, and I can jump three times as far as he can. I’ll see for myself what this Great World is like and then I’ll go back to the Smiling Pool and stay there the rest of my life. Chugarum, how warm it is!”

It was warm. Jolly, round, red Mr. Sun was smiling his broadest and pouring his warmest rays down on the Green Meadows. The Merry Little Breezes of Old Mother West Wind were taking a nap. You see, they had played so hard early in the morning that they were tired. So there was nobody and nothing to cool Grandfather Frog, and he just grew warmer and warmer with each jump. He began to grow thirsty, and he did long for a plunge in dear, cool Smiling Pool! But he was stubborn. He wouldn’t turn back no matter how uncomfortable he felt. He would see the Great World if it killed him. So he kept right on, jump, jump, jump, jump.

Now, Grandfather Frog had been up the Laughing Brook and down the Laughing Brook, where he could cool off whenever he became too warm, but never before had he been very far away from water, and he found this a very different matter. At first he had made great jumps, for that is what his long legs were given him for, but the long grass bothered him, and after a little the jumps grew shorter and shorter and shorter, and with every jump he puffed and puffed and presently began to grunt. You see, he never before had made more than a few jumps at a time without resting, and his legs were not used to it. So they grew tired in a very little while.

Now if Grandfather Frog had known as much about the Green Meadows as the little people who live there all the time do, he would have taken the Lone Little Path where the going was easy. But he didn’t. He just started right out without knowing where he was going, and, of course, the way was hard, very hard, indeed. The grass was so tall that he couldn’t see over it, and the ground was so rough that it hurt his tender feet, which were used to the soft, mossy bank of the Smiling Pool. He had gone only a little way before he wished with all his might that he had never thought of seeing the Great World. But he had said that he was going to, and he would: so he kept right on, jump, jump, rest; jump, jump, jump, rest; jump, and then a long rest.

It was during one of these rests that he heard footsteps and then a dreadful sound that made cold chills run all over him. Sniff, sniff, sniff! It was coming nearer. Grandfather Frog flattened himself down as close to the ground as he could get. But it

Illustrations. October 13 to October 18, 1913.



520. Spotty the Turtle Plays a Doctor
Then Spotty the Turtle settled back and pulled.



521. Old Mr Toad Visits Grandfather Frog
Old Mr. Toad pretended not to notice how out of sorts Old Grandfather Frog was.



522. Grandfather Frog and Old Mr Toad Dispute
“O!” replied Old Mr. Toad, “I’m not afraid.”



523. Grandfather Frog Starts Out to See the Great World
“Chugarum!” said he, “I’ll do it.”



524. Old Grandfather Frog is Stubborn
Grandfather actually had started out to see the Great World.



525. Grandfather Frog Keeps On
“I won’t go back to the Smiling Pool until I have seen the Great World,” said Grandfather Frog gruffly.

was of no use—no use at all. The sniffing came nearer and nearer, and then right over him stood Bowser the Hound! Bowser looked just as surprised as he felt. He put out one paw and turned Grandfather Frog over on his back, Grandfather Frog struggled to his feet and made two frightened jumps

“Bow wow!” cried Bowser, and rolled him over again. Bower thought it great fun. He was enjoying it. Grandfather Frog wasn’t. He thought that his last day had come.

(The Adventures of Grandfather Frog, Chapter 11)

STORY 525. October 18, 1913

Grandfather Frog Keeps On

Grandfather Frog is old and wise
But even age is foolish.
I’m sure you’ll all agree with me
His stubbornness was mulish.

That his very last day had come Grandfather Frog was sure. He didn’t have the least doubt about it. Here he was at the mercy of Bowser the Hound out on the Green Meadows far from the dear, safe Smiling Pool. Every time he moved Bowser flipped him over on his back and danced around him barking with joy. It was great fun for Bowser. Every minute Grandfather Frog expected to feel Bowser’s terrible teeth and he grew cold at the thought. When he found that he couldn’t get away he just lay still. He was too tired and frightened to do much of anything else, anyway.

Now, when he lay still he spoiled Bowser’s fun, for it was seeing him jump and kick his long legs legs that tickled Bowser so. Bowser tossed him up in the air two or three times, but Grandfather Frog simply lay where he fell without moving.

“Bow, wow, wow!” cried Bowser in his great deep voice. Grandfather Frog didn’t so much as blink his great goggly eyes. Bowser sniffed him all over.

“I guess I’ve frightened him to death,” said Bowser, talking to himself. “I didn’t mean to do that. I just wanted to have some fun with him.” With that Bowser took one more sniff and then trotted off to try to find something more exciting. You see he hadn’t had the least intention in the world of really hurting Grandfather Frog.

Grandfather Frog kept perfectly still until he was sure that Bowser was nowhere near. Then he gave a great sigh of relief and crawled under a big mullein leaf to rest and think things over.

“Chugarum, that was a terrible experience; it was indeed!” said he to himself, shivering at the very thought of what he had been through. “Nothing like that ever happened to me in the Smiling Pool. I’ve always said that the Smiling Pool is a better place in which to live than out in the Great World and now I know it. The question is, what had I best do now?”

Now, right down in his heart Grandfather Frog knew the answer. Of course the

best thing to do was to go straight back to the Smiling Pool as fast as he could. But Grandfather Frog is stubborn. Yes, sir, he certainly is stubborn. And stubbornness is often just another name for foolishness. He had told Jerry Muskrat that he was going out to see the Great World. Now, if he went back Jerry would laugh at him.

“I won’t do it!” said Grandfather Frog.

“What won’t you do?” asked a voice so close to him that Grandfather Frog made a long jump before he thought. You see at the smiling pool he always jumped at the least hint of danger, and because one jump always took him into the water he was always safe. But there was no water here and that jump took him right out where anybody passing could see him. Then he turned around to see who had startled him so. It was Danny Meadow Mouse.

“I won’t go back to the Smiling Pool until I have seen the Great World,” replied Grandfather Frog gruffly.

“You won’t see much of the Great World if you jump like that every time you get a scare,” said Danny, shaking his head. “No, sir, you won’t see much of the Great World, because one of these times you’ll jump right into the claws of old Whitetail the Marsh Hawk, or his cousin Redtail, or Reddy Fox. You take my advice, Grandfather Frog and go straight back to the Smiling Pool. You don’t know enough about the Great World to take care of yourself.”

But Grandfather Frog was stubborn and set in his ways and nothing that Danny Meadow Mouse could say changed his mind in the least. “I started out to see the Great World and I’m going to keep right on,” said he.

“All right,” said Danny at last, “if you will I suppose you will. I’ll go a little way with you just to get you started right.”

Thank you,” replied Grandfather Frog. “Let’s start right away.”

(The Adventures of Grandfather Frog, Chapter 12)

STORY 526. October 20, 1913

Danny Meadow Mouse Feels Responsible

Responsible is a great big word. But it is just as big in its meaning as it is in its looks, and that is the way words should be, I think, don’t you? Anyway, re-spon-sible is the way Danny Meadow Mouse felt when he found Grandfather Frog out on the Green Meadows so far from the Smiling Pool and so stubborn that he would keep on to see the Great World, instead of going back to his big green lily-pad in the Smiling Pool, where he could take care of himself. You remember Peter Rabbit felt re-spon-sible when he when brought little Miss Fuzzytail down from the Old Pasture to the dear old briar patch⁴⁵. He felt that it was his business to see to it that no harm came to her, and that is just the way Danny Meadow Mouse felt about Grandfather Frog.

You see, Grandfather Frog had been hiding, and resting at the same time, under

⁴⁵ STORY 459, 1913.

a big mullein leaf and he hadn't known that Danny was anywhere near until Danny spoke. He had been so startled that he had jumped a long jump, right out in plain sight, and it was right then that Danny began to feel re-spon-sible. Of course, he knew that if Grandfather Frog was going to jump like that every time he was frightened, he wouldn't get very far in the Great World. It might be the right thing to do in the Smiling Pool, where the friendly water would hide him from his enemies, but it was just the wrong thing to do on the Green Meadows or in the Green Forest. Danny had learned when a very tiny fellow that the only safe thing to do when danger was near was to sit perfectly still and hardly breathe.

Now, Danny Meadow Mouse is fond of Grandfather Frog and he couldn't bear to think that something dreadful might happen to him. So when he found that he couldn't get Grandfather Frog to go back to the Smiling Pool he made up his mind that he just had to go along with Grandfather Frog to try to keep him out of danger. Yes, sir, he just had to do it. He felt responsible for Grandfather Frog's safety. So here they were, Danny Meadow Mouse running ahead, anxious and worried and watching sharply for signs of danger, and Grandfather Frog puffing along behind, bound to see the Great World which his cousin, old Mr Toad, said was a better place to live in than the Smiling Pool.

Now Danny has a great many little private paths under the grass all over the Green Meadows and along these he can scamper ever so fast without once showing himself to those who may be looking for him. Of course he started to take Grandfather Frog along one of these little paths. But Grandfather Frog doesn't walk or run; he jumps. There wasn't room in Danny's little paths for jumping, as they soon found out. Grandfather Frog simply couldn't follow Danny along those little paths. Danny sat down to think, and puckered his brows anxiously. He was more worried than ever. It was very clear that Grandfather Frog would have to travel out in the open, where there was room for him to jump and where also he would be right out in plain sight of all who happened along. Once more Danny urged him to go back to the Smiling Pool, but he might as well have talked to a stick or a stone. Grandfather Frog had started out to see the Great World and he was going to see it.

Danny sighed. "If you will you will, I suppose," said he, "and I guess the only place you can travel in any comfort is the Lone Little Path. It is dangerous, very dangerous, but I guess you will have to do it."

"Chugarum!" replied Grandfather Frog, "I'm not afraid. You show me the Lone Little Path and then go about your business, Danny Meadow Mouse.

So Danny led the way to the Lone Little Path and Grandfather Frog sighed with relief, for here he could jump without getting all tangled up in long grass and without hurting his tender feet on sharp stubble where the grass had been cut. But Danny felt more worried than ever. He wouldn't leave Grandfather Frog, because you know, he felt re-spon-sible for him, and at the same time he was terribly afraid, for he felt sure that some of their enemies would see them. He wanted to go back, but he kept right on, and that shows just what a brave little fellow Danny Meadow Mouse was.

(The Adventures of Grandfather Frog, Chapter 13)

Grandfather Frog Has a Strange Ride

A thousand things may happen to,
Ten thousand things befall,
The traveler who careless is
Or thinks he knows it all.

Grandfather Frog, jumping along behind Danny Meadow Mouse up the Lone Little Path, was beginning to think that Danny was the most timid and easiest frightened of all the little meadow people of his acquaintance. Danny kept as much under the grass that overhung the Lone Little Path as he could. When they were perfectly bare places Danny looked this way and looked that way anxiously and then scampered across as fast as he could make his little legs go. When he was safely across he would wait for Grandfather Frog. If a shadow passed over the grass Danny would duck under the nearest leaf and hold his breath.

“Foolish!” muttered Grandfather Frog. “Foolish, foolish to be so afraid! Now, I’m not afraid until I see something to be afraid of. Time enough then. What’s the good of looking for trouble all the time? Now, here I am out in the Great World and I’m not afraid. And here’s Danny Meadow Mouse, who has lived here all his life, acting as if he expected something dreadful to happen any minute. Pooh! How very, very foolish!”

Now Grandfather Frog is old and in the Smiling Pool he is accounted very, very wise. But the wisest sometimes become foolish when they think that they know all there is to know. It was so with Grandfather Frog now. It was he who was foolish and not Danny Meadow Mouse. You see Danny knew all the dangers on the Green Meadows and how many sharp eyes were all the time watching for him. He had long ago learned that the only way to feel safe was to feel afraid. Yes, sir, Danny had learned that he was safest when he was most afraid. You see then he was watching for danger every minute and so he wasn’t likely to be surprised by his hungry enemies.

So while Grandfather Frog was looking down on Danny for being so timid Danny was really doing the wisest thing. More than that, he was really very, very brave. He was showing Grandfather Frog the way up the Lone Little Path to see the Great World, when he himself would never, never have thought of traveling anywhere but along his secret little paths under the grass, where none could see him. He was doing it because Grandfather Frog couldn’t jump anywhere, excepting where the way was fairly clear as in the Lone Little Path, and Danny was afraid that unless Grandfather Frog had someone with him to watch out for him he would surely come to a sad end.

The farther they went with nothing happening the more foolish Danny’s timid way of running and hiding seemed to Grandfather Frog and he was just about to tell Danny just what he thought, when Danny dived into the long grass beside the path and in his sharp squeaky voice warned Grandfather Frog to do the same. But Grandfather Frog didn’t.

“Chugarum!” said he, “I don’t see anything to be afraid of and I’m not going to

hide until I do.”

So he sat still, right where he was, in the middle of the Lone Little Path, looking this way and that way, and seeing nothing to be afraid of. And just then around a turn in the Lone Little Path came—who do you think? Why, Farmer Brown’s boy! He saw Grandfather Frog, and with a whoop of joy he sprang for him. Grandfather Frog gave a frightened croak and jumped, but he was too late. Before he could make a second jump Farmer Brown’s boy had him by his long hind legs.

“Ha, ha!” shouted Farmer Brown’s boy, “I believe this is the very old chap I have tried so often to catch in the Smiling Pool. Those legs of yours will be might fine eating, Mr Frog. They will, indeed.”

With that he tied Grandfather Frog’s legs together and went on his way across the Green Meadows with poor old Grandfather Frog dangling from the end of a string. It was a strange ride and a most uncomfortable one, and with all his might Grandfather Frog wished he had never thought of going out into the Great World.

(The Adventures of Grandfather Frog, Chapter 14)

STORY 528. October 22, 1913

Grandfather Frog Gives Up Hope

With his legs tied together, hanging head down from the end of a string, Grandfather Frog was being carried he knew not where by Farmer Brown’s boy. It was dreadful. Half way across the Green Meadow the Merry Little Breezes of Old Mother West Wind came dancing along. At first, they didn’t see Grandfather Frog, but presently one of them, rushing up to tease Farmer Brown’s boy by blowing off his hat caught sight of Grandfather Frog.

Now the Merry Little Breezes are great friends of Grandfather Frog. Many, many times they had blown foolish green flies over to him as he sat on his big green lily-pad, and they are very fond of him. So when this one caught sight of him in such a dreadful position he forgot all about teasing Farmer Brown’s boy. He raced away to tell the other Merry Little Breezes. For a minute they were perfectly still. They forgot all about being merry and dancing.

“It’s awful, just perfectly awful,” cried one.

“We must do something to help Grandfather Frog,” cried another.

“Of course we must,” said a third.

“But what can we do?” asked a fourth.

Nobody replied. They just thought and thought. Finally the first one spoke. “We might try to comfort him a little,” said he.

“Of course we will do that!” they shouted all together.

“And if we throw dust in the face of Farmer Brown’s boy and steal his hat perhaps

he will put Grandfather Frog down,” continued the Merry Little Breeze.

“The very thing!” the others cried, dancing about with excitement.

“Then we can rush about and tell all Grandfather Frog’s friends what has happened to him and where he is. Perhaps some of them can help us,” the Little Breeze continued.

They wasted no more time talking, but raced after Father Brown’s boy as fast as they could go. One of them, who was faster than the others, ran ahead and whispered in Grandfather Frog’s ear that they were coming to help him. But poor old Grandfather Frog couldn’t be comforted. He couldn’t see what there was that the Merry Little Breezes could do. His legs smarted where the string cut into the skin, and his head ached, for you know he was hanging head down. No, sir, Grandfather Frog couldn’t be comforted. He was in a terrible fix and he couldn’t see any way out of it. He hadn’t the least bit of hope left. And all the time Farmer Brown’s boy was trudging along whistling merrily. You see, it didn’t occur to him to think how Grandfather Frog must be suffering and how terribly frightened he must be. He wasn’t cruel. No, indeed. Farmer Brown’s boy wasn’t cruel. That is, he didn’t mean to be cruel. He was thoughtless like a great many other boys, and girls, too.

So he went whistling on his way until he reached the Long Lane leading from the Green Meadows up to Farmer Brown’s dooryard. No sooner was he in the Long Lane than something happened. A great cloud of dust and leaves and tiny sticks was dashed in his face and nearly choked him. Dirt got in his eyes. His hat was snatched from his head and went sailing over into the garden. He dropped Grandfather Frog and felt for his handkerchief to wipe the dirt from his eyes.

“Phew!” exclaimed Farmer Brown’s boy as he started after his hat. “It’s funny where that wind comes from so suddenly!”

But you know and I know that it was the Merry Little Breezes working together who made up that sudden wind. And Grandfather Frog ought to have known it, too, but he didn’t. You see the dust had got in his nose and eyes just as it had in those of Farmer Brown’s boy, and he was so frightened and confused that he couldn’t think. So he lay just where Farmer Brown’s boy dropped him, and he didn’t have any more hope than before.

(The Adventures of Grandfather Frog, Chapter 15)

STORY 529. October 23, 1913

The Merry Little Breezes Work Hard

The Merry Little Breezes almost shouted aloud with delight when they saw Farmer Brown’s boy drop Grandfather Frog to feel for his handkerchief and wipe out the dust which they had thrown in his eyes. Then he had to climb the fence and chase his hat through the garden. They would let him almost get his hands on it and then just as he

thought that he surely had it they would snatch it away. It was great fun for the Merry Breezes. But they were not doing it for fun. No, indeed, they were not doing it for fun! They were doing it to lead Farmer Brown's boy away from Grandfather Frog.

Just as soon as they dared, they dropped the hat and then separated and rushed away in all directions across the Green Meadows, over to the Green Forest and down to the Smiling Pool. What were they going for? Why, to hunt for some of Grandfather Frog's friends and ask their help. You see the Merry Little Breezes could make Farmer Brown's boy drop Grandfather Frog, but they couldn't until a knot or cut a string, and this is just what had got to be done to set Grandfather Frog free, for his hind legs were tied together. So now they were looking for some one with sharp teeth who thought enough of Grandfather Frog to come help him.

One thought of Striped Chipmunk and started for the old stone wall to look for him. Another went in search of Danny Meadow Mouse. A third headed for the dear old briar patch after Peter Rabbit. A fourth remembered Jimmy Skunk and how he had once set Blacky the Crow free from a snare⁴⁶. A fifth remembered what sharp teeth Happy Jack Squirrel has and hurried over to the Green Forest to look for him. A sixth started straight for the Smiling Pool to tell Jerry Muskrat. And every one of them raced as fast as he could.

All this time Grandfather Frog was without hope. Yes, sir, poor old Grandfather Frog was wholly in despair. You see, he didn't know what the Merry Little Breezes were trying to do and he was so frightened and confused that he couldn't think. When Farmer Brown's boy dropped him, he lay for a few minutes right where he fell. Then right close at hand he saw an old board and without really thinking he tried to get to it, for there looked as if there might be room for him to hide under it. It was hard work, for you know his long hind legs which he uses for jumping were tied together. The best he could do was to crawl and wriggle and pull himself along. Just as Farmer Brown's boy started to climb the fence back into the Long Lane, his hat in his hand, Grandfather Frog reached the old board and crawled under it.

Now when the Merry Little Breezes had thrown the dust in Farmer Brown's boy's face and snatched his hat, he had dropped Grandfather Frog in such a hurry that he didn't notice just where he did drop him, so now he didn't know the exact place to look for him. But he knew pretty near, and he hadn't the least doubt but that he would find him. He had just started to look when the dinner horn sounded. Farmer Brown's boy hesitated. He was hungry. If he was late, he might lose his dinner. He could come back later to look for Grandfather Frog, for with his legs tied Grandfather Frog couldn't get far. So with a last look to make sure of the place, Farmer Brown's boy started for the house.

If the Merry Little Breezes had known this, they would have felt ever so much better. But they didn't. So they hurried as fast as ever they could to find Grandfather Frog's friends, and worked until they were almost too tired to move, for it seemed as if every single one of Grandfather Frog's friends had taken that particular day to go away from home. So while Farmer Brown's boy ate his dinner and Grandfather Frog lay

hiding under the old board in the Long Lane, the Merry Little Breezes did their best to find help for him.

(The Adventures of Grandfather Frog, Chapter 16)

STORY 530. October 24, 1913

Striped Chipmunk Cuts the String

Happy hop! Flippy flop! All on a Summer day,
My mother turned me from the house and sent me out to play!”

Striped Chipmunk knew perfectly well that that was just nonsense, but Striped Chipmunk learned a long time ago that when you are just bubbling right over with good feeling there is fun in saying and doing foolish things, and that is just how he was feeling. So he ran along an old rail fence on one side of the Long Lane saying foolish things and cutting up foolish capers just because he felt so good, and all the time seeing all that those bright little eyes of his could take in.

Now Striped Chipmunk and the Merry Little Breezes of Old Mother West Wind are great friends, very great friends indeed. Almost every morning they have a grand frolic together. But this morning the Merry Little Breezes hadn’t come over to the old stone wall where Striped Chipmunk makes his home. Anyway, they hadn’t come at the usual time. Striped Chipmunk had waited a little while and then, because he was feeling so good, he decided to take a run down the Long Lane to see if anything new had happened there. That is how it happened that when one of the Merry Little Breezes did go to look for him, and was terribly anxious to find him to ask him to come to the help of Grandfather Frog, he was nowhere to be found.

But Striped Chipmunk didn’t know anything about that. He scampered along the top rails of the old fence, jumped up on top of a post and sat up to wash his face and hands, for Striped Chipmunk is very neat and cannot bear to be the least bit dirty. He looked up and winked at Ol’ Mistah Buzzard sailing round and round way, way up in the blue, blue sky. He chased his own tail round and round until he nearly fell off of the post. He made a wry face in the direction of Redtail the Hawk, whom he could see sitting in the-top of a tall tree way over on the Green Meadows. He scolded Bowser the Hound, who happened to come trotting up the Long Lane, and didn’t stop scolding until Bowser was out of sight. Then he kicked up his heels and whisked along the old fence again.

Half way across a shaky old rail he suddenly stopped. His bright eyes had seen something that filled him with curiosity, quite as much curiosity as Peter Rabbit would have had. It was a piece of string. Yes, sir, it was a piece of string. Now Striped Chipmunk often had found pieces of string, so there was nothing particularly interesting in the string itself. What did interest him and make him very curious was the fact that this piece of string kept moving. Every few seconds it gave a little jerk. Who ever heard of a piece of string moving all by itself? Certainly, Striped Chipmunk never had. He couldn’t understand it.

Illustrations. October 20 to October 25, 1913.



526. Danny Meadow Mouse Feels Responsible
So Danny led the way to the Lone Little Path.



527. Grandfather Frog Has a Strange Ride
So he sat still, right where he was, in the middle of the Lone Little Path.



528. Grandfather Frog Gives Up Hope
A great cloud of dust and sticks and tiny leaves was dashed into his face.



529. The Merry Little Breezes Work Hard
It was hard work, for, you know, his long hind legs he used for jumping were tied behind him.



530. Striped Chipmunk Cuts the String
“Why, Grandfather Frog, what under the sun are you doing here?” he shouted.



531. Grandfather Frog Hurries Away
“Chugarum!” said he, “I am going to see the Great World first.”

For a few minutes he watched it from the top rail of the old fence. Then he scurried down to the ground, and, a few steps at a time, stopping to watch sharply between each little run, drew nearer and nearer to that queer-acting string. It gave him a funny feeling inside to see a string acting like that, so he was very careful not to get too near. He looked at it from one side, then ran around and looked at it from the other side. At last he got where he could see that one end of the string was under an old board, and then he began to understand. Of course, there was somebody hiding under that old board and jerking the string.

Striped Chipmunk sat down and scratched his head thoughtfully. Whoever was pulling that string couldn't be very big or they would never have been able to crawl under that old board, therefore he needn't be afraid. A gleam of mischief twinkled in Striped Chipmunk's eyes. He seized the other end of the string and began to pull. Such a jerking and yanking as began right away! But he held on and pulled harder. Then out from under the old board appeared the queer, webbed feet of Grandfather Frog tied together. Striped Chipmunk was so surprised that he let go of the string and nearly fell over backward.

"Why Grandfather Frog what under the sun are you doing here?" he shouted.

When Striped Chipmunk let go of the string Grandfather promptly drew his feet back under the old board, but when he heard Striped Chipmunk's voice he slowly and painfully crawled out. He told how he had been caught and tied by Farmer Brown's boy and finally dropped near the old board. He told how terribly frightened he was and how sore his legs were. Striped Chipmunk didn't wait for him to finish. In a flash he was at work with his sharp little teeth and had cut the cruel string before Grandfather Frog had finished his story.

(The Adventures of Grandfather Frog, Chapter 17)

STORY 531. October 25, 1913

Grandfather Frog Hurries Away

When Striped Chipmunk cut the string that bound the long legs of Grandfather Frog together, Grandfather Frog was so relieved that he hardly knew what to do. Of course he thanked Striped Chipmunk over and over again. Striped Chipmunk said that it was nothing, just nothing at all, and that he was very glad, indeed, to help Grandfather Frog.

"We folks who live out in the Great World have to help one another," said Striped Chipmunk, "because we never know when we may need help ourselves. Now, you take my advice, Grandfather Frog, and go back to the Smiling Pool as fast as you can. The Great World is no place for an old fellow like you, because you don't know how to take care of yourself."

Now when he said that, Striped Chipmunk made a great mistake. Old people never like to be told that they are old or that they do not know all there is to know. Grandfather Frog straightened up and tried to look very dignified.

“Chugarum!” said he, “I’d have you to know, Striped Chipmunk, that people were coming to me for advice before you were born. It was just an accident that Farmer Brown’s boy caught me, and I’d like to see him do it again. Yes, sir, I’d like to see him do it again!”

Dear me, dear me! Grandfather Frog was boasting. If he had been safe at home in the Smiling Pool there might have been some excuse for boasting but way over here in the Long Lane not even knowing the way back to the Smiling Pool, it was foolish, very foolish, indeed. No one knew that better than Striped Chipmunk. But he has a great deal of respect for Grandfather Frog and he knew, too, that Grandfather Frog was feeling very much out of sorts and very much mortified to think that he had been caught in such a scrape, so he put a hand over his mouth to hide a smile as he said:

“Of course, he isn’t going to catch you again. I know how wise and smart you are, but you look to me very tired and there are so many dangers out here in the Great World that it seems to me that the very best thing you can do is to go back to the Smiling Pool.”

But Grandfather Frog is stubborn, you know. He had started out to see the Great World and he didn’t want the little people of the Green Meadows and the Green Forest to think that he was afraid. The truth is Grandfather Frog was more afraid of being laughed at than he was of the dangers around him, which shows just how foolish wise people can be sometimes. So he shook his head.

“Chugarum!” said he, “I am going to see the Great World first and then I am going back to the Smiling Pool. Do you happen to know where there is any water? I am very thirsty.”

Now over on the other side of the Long Lane was a spring where Farmer Brown’s boy filled his jug with clear cold water to take with him to the cornfield when he had to work there. Striped Chipmunk knew all about that spring, for he had been there for a drink many times. So he told Grandfather Frog just where the spring was and how to get to it. He even offered to show the way. But Grandfather Frog said that he would rather go alone.

“Watch out, Grandfather Frog, and don’t fall in, because you might not be able to get out again,” warned Striped Chipmunk.

Grandfather Frog looked up sharply to see if Striped Chipmunk was making fun of him. The very idea of anyone thinking that he, who had lived in the water all his life, couldn’t get out when he pleased! But Striped Chipmunk looked really in earnest, so Grandfather Frog swallowed the quick retort on the tip of his tongue, thanked Striped Chipmunk, and hurried away to look for the spring, for he was very, very thirsty. Besides, he was very, very hot, and he hurried still faster as he thought of the cool bath he would have when he found the spring.

(The Adventures of Grandfather Frog, Chapter 18)

Grandfather Frog Jumps into More Trouble

Some people are heedless and run into trouble. Some people are stupid and walk into trouble. Grandfather Frog was both heedless and stupid and jumped into trouble. When Striped Chipmunk told him where the spring was it seemed to him that he couldn't wait to reach it. You see Grandfather Frog had spent all his life in the Smiling Pool, where he could get a drink whenever he wanted it by just reaching over the edge of his big green lily-pad. Whenever he was too warm all he had to do was to say "Chugarum!" and dive head first into the cool water. So he wasn't used to going a long time without water as he had to do since he started out to see the Great World.

Jump, jump, jump! Grandfather Frog was going as fast as ever he could in the direction Striped Chipmunk had pointed out. Every three or four jumps he would stop for just a wee bit of rest, then off he would go again, jump, jump, jump! And each jump was a long one. Peter Rabbit certainly would have been envious if he could have seen those long jumps of Grandfather Frog.

At last the ground began to grow damp. The farther he went the damper it grew. Presently it became fairly wet, and there was a great deal of soft, cool, wet moss. How good it did feel to Grandfather Frog's poor tired feet!

"Must be I'm most there," said Grandfather Frog to himself, as he scrambled up on a big mossy hummock so as to look around. Right away he saw a little path from the direction of the Long Lane. It led right past the very hummock on which Grandfather Frog was sitting and he noticed that where the ground was very soft and wet old boards had been laid down. That puzzled Grandfather Frog a great deal.

"It's a sure enough path," said he, "but what under the blue, blue sky does any one want to spoil it for by putting those boards there?"

You see Grandfather Frog likes the soft, wet mud and he couldn't understand how any one, even Farmer Brown's boy, could prefer a hard dry path. Of course he never had worn shoes himself so he couldn't understand why any one should want dry feet when they could just as well have wet ones. He was still puzzling over it when he heard a sound that made him nearly lose his balance and tumble off the hummock. It was a whistle. It was the whistle of Farmer Brown's boy! Grandfather Frog knew it right away because he often had heard it over by the Smiling Pool. The whistle came from over in the Long Lane. Farmer Brown's boy had had his dinner and was on his way back to look for Grandfather Frog at the place where he had been dropped when the Merry Little Breezes threw dust in the face of Farmer Brown's boy and ran away with his hat.

Grandfather Frog actually smiled as he thought of how surprised Farmer Brown's boy was going to be when he could find no trace of him. Suddenly the smile seemed to freeze on Grandfather Frog's face. That whistle was coming nearer! Farmer Brown's boy had left the Long Lane and was coming along the little path. The truth is he was coming for a drink at the spring. But Grandfather Frog didn't think of this. He was sure

that in some way Farmer Brown's boy had found out which way he had gone and was coming after him. He crouched down as flat as he could on the big hummock and held his breath. Farmer Brown's boy went straight past. Just a few steps beyond he stopped and knelt down. Peeping through the grass, Grandfather Frog saw him dip up beautiful clear water in an old cup and drink. Then Grandfather Frog knew just where the spring was.

A few minutes later Farmer Brown's boy passed again, still whistling, on his way to the Long Lane, Grandfather Frog waited only long enough to be sure that he had really gone. Then with bigger jumps than ever he started for the spring. A dozen long jumps and he could see the water. Two more jumps and then a long jump and he had landed in the spring with a splash. "Chugarum!" cried Grandfather Frog. "how good the water feels!"

And all the time without knowing it Grandfather Frog had jumped straight into more trouble.

(The Adventures of Grandfather Frog, Chapter 19)

STORY 533. October 28, 1913

Grandfather Frog Loses Heart

Look before you leap;
The water may be deep.

That is the very best kind of advice, but most people find it out when it is too late. Grandfather Frog did. Of course, he had heard that little verse all his life. Indeed, he had been very fond of saying it to those who came to the Smiling Pool to ask his advice. But Grandfather Frog seemed to have left all his wisdom behind him when he left the Smiling Pool to go out into the Great World. You see it is very hard work for any one who has been sought after for advice to turn right around and take advice themselves. So Grandfather Frog had been getting into trouble ever since he started out on his foolish journey. He had gotten into scrape after scrape, and now here he was in another, and he had landed in it headfirst with a great splash.

Of course when he had seen the cool sparkling water of the spring it had seemed to him that he just couldn't wait another second to get into it. He was so hot and dry and dreadfully thirsty and uncomfortable! And so—he didn't! He just dived in with a great long jump. Oh, how good that water felt! For a few minutes he couldn't think of anything else. It was cooler than the water of the Smiling Pool because, as you know, it was a spring. But it felt all the better for that, and Grandfather Frog just closed his eyes and floated there in pure happiness.

Presently he opened his eyes to look around. Then he blinked them rapidly for a minute or so. He rubbed them to make sure that he saw aright. His heart seemed to sink way, way down toward his toes. "Chugarum!" exclaimed Grandfather Frog. "Chugarum!" And after that for a long time he didn't say a word.

You see it was this way: All around him, rose perfectly straight, smooth walls. He could look up and see a little of the blue, blue sky right overhead and whispering leaves of trees and bushes. Over the edge of the smooth straight wall grasses were bending. But they were so far above his head, so dreadfully far! There wasn't any place to climb out! Grandfather Frog was in a prison! He didn't understand it at all, but it was so.

Of course Farmer Brown's boy could have told him all about it. A long time before Farmer Brown himself had found that spring, and because the water was so clear and cold and pure he had cleared away all the dirt and rubbish around it. Then he had knocked the bottom out of a nice clean barrel and had dug down where the water bubbled up out of the ground and had set the barrel down in this hole and had filled in the bottom with clean white sand for the water to bubble up through. About half way up the barrel he had cut a little hole for the water to run out as fast as it bubbled in at the bottom. Of course the water never could fill the barrel because when it reached that hole it ran out. This left a straight, smooth wall up above, a wall altogether too high for Grandfather Frog to jump over from the inside.

Poor old Grandfather Frog! He wished more than ever that he never, never had thought of leaving the Smiling Pool to see the Great World. Round and round he swam, but he couldn't see any way out of it. The little hole where the water ran out too small for him to squeeze through, as he found out by trying and trying. So far as he could see he had just got to stay there all the rest of his life. Worse still, he knew that Farmer Brown's boy sometimes came to the spring for a drink, for he had seen him do it. That meant that the very next time he came he would find Grandfather Frog, because there was no place to hide. When Grandfather Frog thought of that he just lost heart. Yes, sir, he just lost heart. He gave up all hope of ever seeing the Smiling Pool again, and two big tears ran out of his big goggly eyes.

(The Adventures of Grandfather Frog, Chapter 20)

STORY 534. October 29, 1913

Merry Little Breezes Try to Comfort Grandfather Frog

When the Merry Little Breezes of Old Mother West Wind had left Grandfather Frog in the Long Lane where Farmer Brown's boy had dropped him they had hurried as fast as ever they could to try to find some of his friends to come help him. Not one of them had been successful. No one was at home and no one was in any of the places where they usually were to be found. The Merry Little Breezes looked and looked. Then one by one they sadly turned back to the Long Lane. They felt so badly that they just hated to go back where they had left Grandfather Frog.

When they got there they found Striped Chipmunk, who had cut the string with which Grandfather Frog's legs had been tied, and who now was scolding Farmer Brown's boy as fast as his tongue could go.

"Where is he?" cried Merry Little Breezes excitedly.

Striped Chipmunk stopped scolding long enough to point to Farmer Brown's boy,

who was hunting in the grass for some trace of Grandfather Frog, then he began to scold again harder than ever.

“We don’t mean him, you stupid; we can see him for ourselves! Where’s Grandfather Frog?” cried the Merry Little Breezes, all speaking at once.

“I don’t know,” replied Striped Chipmunk, “and what’s more, I don’t care! He wouldn’t take my advice and go back to the Smiling Pool where he belongs, and now I don’t care what be- comes of him.”

Now, this wasn’t true, for Striped Chipmunk isn’t that kind. It was mostly talk, and the Merry Little Breezes knew it. They knew that Striped Chipmunk really thinks a great deal of Grandfather Frog, just as they do. So they pretended not to notice what he said or how put out he seemed. After a while he told them that he had set Grandfather Frog free and that then he had started for the spring on the other side of the Long Lane. The Merry Little Breezes were delighted to hear the good news and they said such a lot of nice things to Striped Chipmunk that he quite forgot to scold Farmer Brown’s boy. Then they started for the spring, dancing merrily, for they felt sure that there Grandfather Frog was all right and they expected to find him quite at home.

“Hello, Grandfather Frog!” they shouted as they peeped into the spring. “How do you like your new home?”

Grandfather Frog made no reply. He just rolled his great goggly eyes up at them, and they were full of tears.

“Why—why—why Grandfather Frog, what is the matter now?” they cried.

“Chugarum,” said Grandfather Frog, and his voice sounded all choky, “I can’t get out.”

Then they noticed for the first time how straight and smooth the walls of the spring were and how far down Grandfather Frog was, and they knew that he spoke the truth. They tried bending down the grasses that grew around the edge of the spring, but none were long enough to reach the water. If they had stopped to think they would have known that Grandfather Frog couldn’t have climbed up by them anyway. Then they tried to lift a big stick into the spring, but it was too heavy for them and they couldn’t move it. However, they did manage to blow an old shingle in, and this gave Grandfather Frog something to sit on, so that he began to feel a little better. Then they said all the comforting things they could think of. They told him that no harm could come to him there unless Farmer Brown’s boy should happen to see him.

“That’s just what I am afraid of!” croaked Grandfather Frog. “He is sure to see me if he comes for a drink, for there is no place to hide.”

“Perhaps he won’t come,” said one of the Little Breezes hopefully, but all the time he knew better.

“If he does come you can hide under the piece of shingle and then he won’t know you are here at all,” said another.

“Grandfather Frog brightened up. “That’s so!” said he. “That’s a good idea, and I’ll try it.”

Then the Merry Little Breezes promised that one of them would keep watch and let him know when Farmer Brown’s boy was coming, and all the others started off to have another hunt for some one to help Grandfather Frog out of this new trouble.

(The Adventures of Grandfather Frog, Chapter 21)

STORY 535. October 30, 1913

Grandfather Frog’s Troubles Grow

Headfirst in; no way out;
It’s best to know what you’re about!

Grandfather Frog had had plenty of time to realize how very true this is. As he sat on the old shingle, which the Merry Little Breezes had blown into the spring where he was a prisoner he thought a great deal about that little word “if.” If he hadn’t left the Smiling Pool, if he hadn’t been stubborn and set in his ways, if he hadn’t been in such a hurry, if he had looked to see where he was leaping—well, any one of those “ifs” would have kept him out of his present trouble.

It really wasn’t so bad in the spring. That is, it wouldn’t have been so bad, but for the fear that Farmer Brown’s boy might come for a drink and find him there. That was Grandfather Frog’s one great fear, and it gave him bad dreams whenever he tried to take a nap. He grew cold all over at the very thought of being caught again by Farmer Brown’s boy, and when at last, one of the Merry Little Breezes hurried up to tell him that Farmer Brown’s boy actually was coming, poor old Grandfather Frog was so frightened that the Merry Little Breeze had to tell him twice to hide under the old shingle as it floated on the water.

At last he got it through his head and drawing a very long breath he dived into the water and swam under the old shingle. He was just in time. Yes, sir, he was just in time. If Farmer Brown’s boy hadn’t been thinking of something else he certainly would have noticed the little rings on the water made by Grandfather Frog when he dived in. But he was thinking of something else and it wasn’t until he dipped a cup in for the second time that even saw the old shingle.

“Hello!” he exclaimed, “That must have blown in since I was here yesterday. We can’t have anything like that in our nice spring.”

With that he reached out for the old shingle and Grandfather Frog, hiding under it, gave himself up for lost. But the anxious Little Breeze had been watching sharply and the instant he saw what Farmer Brown’s boy was going to do he played the old, old trick⁴⁷ of snatching his hat from his head. The truth is he couldn’t think of anything else to do. Farmer Brown’s boy grabbed at his hat, and then, because he was in a hurry and had other things to do, he started off without thinking of the old shingle again.

47 STORY 187, 1912.

“Chugarum!” cried Grandfather Frog as he swam out from under the shingle and climbed up on it, “That certainly was a close call. If I have many more like it, I certainly shall die of fright.”

Nothing more happened for a long time and Grandfather Frog was wondering if it wouldn’t be safe to take a nap when he saw peeping over the edge above him two eyes. They were greenish yellow eyes and they stared and stared. Grandfather Frog stared and stared back. He just couldn’t help it. He didn’t know whom they belonged to. He couldn’t remember ever having seen them before. He was afraid, and yet somehow he couldn’t make up his mind to jump. He started so hard at the eyes that he didn’t notice a long furry paw slowly, very slowly, reaching down toward him. Nearer it crept and nearer. Then suddenly it moved like a flash. Grandfather Frog felt sharp claws on his white and yellow waistcoat, and before he could even open his mouth to cry “Chugarum” he was sent flying through the air and landed on his back in the grass. Pounce! Two paws pinned him down and the greenish yellow eyes were not an inch from his own. They belonged to Black Pussy, one of Farmer Brown’s cats⁴⁸.

(The Adventures of Grandfather Frog, Chapter 22)

STORY 536. October 31, 1913

Dear Old Smiling Pool Once More

Black Pussy was having a good time. Grandfather Frog wasn’t. It was great fun for Black Pussy to slip a paw under Grandfather Frog and toss him up in the air. It was still more fun to pretend to go away, but instead to hide and the instant Grandfather Frog started off to pounce upon him and cuff him and roll him about. But there wasn’t any fun in it for Grandfather Frog. In the first place he didn’t know whether or not Black Pussy liked frogs to eat, and so he was terribly frightened. In the second place Black Pussy didn’t always cover up her claws and they, pricked right through Grandfather Frog’s white and yellow waistcoat and hurt, for he is very tender there.

At last Black Pussy grew tired of playing, and catching up Grandfather Frog in her mouth she started along the little path from the spring to the Long Lane. Grandfather Frog didn’t even kick, which was just as well, because if he had Black Pussy would have held him tighter, and that would have been very uncomfortable indeed.

“It’s all over and this is the end,” moaned Grandfather Frog. “I’m going to be eaten now. O, why, why did I ever leave the Smiling Pool?”

Just as Black Pussy slipped into the Long Lane, Grandfather Frog heard a familiar sound. It was a whistle, a merry whistle. It was the whistle of Farmer Brown’s boy. It was coming nearer and nearer. A little bit of hope began to stir in the heart of Grandfather Frog. He didn’t know just why, but it did. Always he had been in the greatest of fear of Farmer Brown’s boy, but now—well, if Farmer Brown’s boy should take him, he might get away from him as he did before, but he was very sure that he never, never could get away from Black Pussy.

⁴⁸ “One of” is omitted in the book version. Another cat, “Thomas,” was mentioned in stories 372 and 373.

The whistle drew nearer. Black Pussy stopped. Then she began to make a queer whirring sound deep down in her throat.

“Hello, Black Pussy! Have you been hunting? Come here and show me what you’ve got,” cried a voice.

Black Pussy arched up her back and began to rub against the legs of Farmer Brown’s boy, and all the time the whirring sound in her throat grew louder. Farmer Brown’s boy stooped down to see what she had in her mouth.

“Why,” he exclaimed, “I do believe this is the very same old frog that got away from me yesterday. You don’t want him, Puss. I’ll just put him in my pocket and take him up to the house by and by.”

With that he took Grandfather Frog from Black Pussy and dropped him in his pocket. He patted Black Pussy, called her a smart cat, and then started on his way whistling merrily. It was dark and rather close in that pocket, but Grandfather Frog didn’t mind this. It was a lot better than feeling sharp teeth and claws all the time. He wondered how soon they would reach the house and what would happen to him then. After what seemed like a long, long time he felt himself swung through the air. Then he landed on the ground with a thump that made him grunt. Farmer Brown’s boy had taken off his coat and thrown it down.

The whistling stopped. Everything was quiet. Grandfather Frog waited and listened, but not a sound could he hear. Then he saw a little ray of light creeping into his prison. He squirmed and pushed and all of a sudden he was out of the pocket. The bright light made him blink. As soon as he could see he looked to see where he was. Then he rubbed his eyes with both hands and looked again. He wasn’t at Farmer Brown’s house at all! Where do you think he was? Why right on the bank of the Smiling Pool, and a little way off was Farmer Brown’s boy fishing.

“Chugarum!” cried Grandfather Frog, and it was the loudest, gladdest Chugarum that the Smiling Pool ever had heard. “Chugarum!” he cried again, and with a great leap he dived with a splash into the dear old Smiling Pool, which smiled more than ever.

And never again did Grandfather Frog try to see the Great World.

(The Adventures of Grandfather Frog, Chapter 23)

STORY 537. November 1, 1913

Paddy the Beaver Gives Warning

Grandfather Frog sat on his big green lily-pad in the Smiling Pool. It seemed to him that never before had the hearts of, the lilies been so golden, or the sky so blue, or the laughter of the Laughing Brook so merry, or the ripples of the Smiling Pool so charming. On another lily-pad near him sat Spotty the Turtle. Billy Mink and Little Joe Otter were stretched out on the bank, and lazily swimming just in front was Jerry Muskrat. Grandfather Frog was telling them of his adventures and what he thought of

Illustrations. October 27 to November 1, 1913.



532. Grandfather Frog Jumps Into More Trouble

Grandfather Frog saw him dip up water and drink it.



533. Grandfather Frog Loses Heart

All around him rose perfectly smooth walls.



534. Merry Little Breezes try to comfort Grandfather Frog

However, they did manage to blow an old shingle in.



535. Grandfather Frog's Troubles Grow

"Chugarum!" said Grandfather Frog. "That certainly was a close call."



536. Dear Old Smiling Pool once more

A little way off was Farmer Brown's boy fishing.



537. Paddy the Beaver Gives Warning

"Did you visit Farmer Brown's dooryard?" asked Little Joe Otter.

the Great World.

"I have always told my cousin, old Mr. Toad, that the Smiling Pool is a much better place than the Great World. I was sure of it before ever I went out to see for myself, and now I know it," said Grandfather Frog.

Billy Mink and Little Joe Otter began to laugh. Grandfather Frog looked at them severely. "What are you laughing at?" he demanded.

"Much you know about the Great World! Why, you haven't seen a tiny corner of it," laughed Billy Mink, who, you know, is a great traveler.

Grandfather Frog drew himself up proudly and replied in his most dignified way, "I will have you to understand, Billy Mink, that I have seen the Great World, and it is no place for honest people to live in."

"Did you visit Farmer Brown's dooryard?" asked Little Joe Otter.

"Or his garden?" added Billy Mink.

"Or the heart of the Green Forest?"

"Or the Old Pasture?"

"Or the Big River?"

"Or the Purple Hills?"

To each of these questions Grandfather Frog was forced to shake his head. It was rather mortifying to have to admit that after all he had been but a very little way out into the Great World, and he was trying to think of some sharp reply when Jerry Muskrat suddenly shouted: "Here comes my big cousin, Paddy the Beaver! Hello, Cousin Paddy! Where have you been all Summer?"

Everybody turned to look in the direction Jerry was pointing. There, sure enough, was Paddy the Beaver swimming out from the Laughing Brook. Billy Mink and Little Joe Otter stared. They had never seen him before. Grandfather Frog and Spotty the Turtle bowed politely. They had met him the time of the great trouble in the Smiling Pool and the Laughing Brook when the water had nearly stopped running because way up in the Green Forest Paddy had built a dam across the Laughing Brook⁴⁹. He had torn it down when his cousin had told him how he had spoiled the Laughing Brook and the Smiling Pool.

"I've come to give warning," said Paddy as he drew near.

"Warning of what?" asked Grandfather Frog.

"That I'm going to make my home up in the Green Forest," replied Paddy.

"Hurrah! I'm so glad!" cried Jerry Muskrat, who was very proud of his big cousin. "But I don't see what you mean by a warning."

Paddy's eyes twinkled. "Well, you see, I have got to make a pond up there," said

49 STORY 396, 1913.

he, “and to do that I have got to take the water of the Laughing Brook.”

Everybody’s face fell. They remembered how dreadful it had been before when there was so little water in the Laughing Brook and the Smiling Pool. Paddy noticed it. “It will be for only a little while,” said he. “Just as soon as my pond is made the water will run back in the Laughing Brook and fill the Smiling Pool just as is now. I wanted you to know what is going to happen, so that you will not be worried, and so I have come to give warning. I hope you will not feel badly about it.”

(published as a single-story book by John H. Eggers, 1917)

STORY 538. November 3, 1913

An Important Meeting at the Smiling Pool

There was great excitement at the Smiling Pool. There was so much excitement that everybody was talking at once. You see, it was this way: Paddy the Beaver had suddenly appeared and given warning that he was going to build a dam across the Laughing Brook way back in the Green Forest so as to make a pond there for himself. Of course, that meant that the Laughing Brook would stop laughing and the Smiling Pool would stop smiling, for there would be very little water in either. Paddy had promised that as soon as his pond was big enough to suit him the water would run again, the Laughing Brook would laugh as merrily as ever and the Smiling Pool would smile just as it was doing now.

“How do we know that he will do as he said he will and let the water run again?” demanded Billy Mink. “For my part I don’t believe he will do anything of the kind!”

“Neither do I!” cried Little Joe Otter. “He’s just a great big bully, who thinks he can do as he pleases because he is so big, and if we let him go ahead, he’ll spoil the Laughing Brook and the Smiling Pool so that we can’t live here anymore.”

Now Billy Mink and Little Joe Otter had never seen Paddy the Beaver before, and they were a little upset to find him so big and strong. The truth is, they were just a little jealous. Perhaps right down deep inside they felt a little bit of fear. They were a little bit inclined to bully the smaller people of the Laughing Brook and the Smiling Pool, and it wasn’t pleasant to have some one come whom they didn’t dare to bully.

Jerry Muskrat and Grandfather Frog and Spotty the Turtle had met Paddy in the spring when he had built a dam and stopped the water, and they remembered how willingly he had torn down the dam when they told him how dreadful it was to have the Laughing Brook stop laughing and the Smiling Pool stop smiling⁵⁰, so now they believed that he would do just as he promised. Still it was dreadful to think of having so little water even for a little while.

“Of course it is very unpleasant,” said Grandfather Frog, thoughtfully, “but I don’t see what we can do about it.”

“Stop him, of course!” snapped Billy Mink. “Tear down his dam as fast as he

50 STORY 396, 1913.

builds it.”

Jerry Muskrat, who remembered how hard he had worked to tear down that other dam only to have it repaired while he slept⁵¹, chuckled.

“I propose that Billy Mink and Little Joe Otter be appointed to go up the Laughing Brook and tear down the dam as fast as Paddy the Beaver builds it,” said he.

“Agreed!” cried all the other little people of the Smiling Pool.

Now Billy Mink and Little Joe Otter never do any work that they can avoid, and everybody knew it. Billy Mink shifted his position on the Big Rock uneasily. “It seems to me that as it is for the good of all of us we all ought to go together and help,” said he.

“Of course, you’re not afraid!” jeered Spotty the Turtle. “Of course, you saw those great big front teeth of his and are just aching to know how they feel!”

Billy Mink lost his temper. He was afraid, and he knew that everybody knew it. He didn’t dare to interfere with Paddy the Beaver. But he tried to make the others think that he really didn’t care what happened to the Smiling Pool.

“O, well,” said he in a very lofty way, “if you folks don’t care enough to do your share, I’m sure I don’t. Little Joe Otter and I can live just as comfortably down at the Big River as up here. We just thought that we would help you out.”

“Which means that you would go off fishing while we did the work,” said Jerry Muskrat slyly.

“I tell you what. Let’s all to up and watch Paddy work. Then if he doesn’t do as he has said he will do, it will be time enough to decide what we will do,” broke in Spotty the Turtle.

So it was agreed that all the little people of the Smiling Pool would go up the Laughing Brook and watch Paddy the Beaver work, all but Grandfather Frog.

STORY 539. November 4, 1913

Smiling Pool is Deserted

“What I want to know is, where has Paddy the Beaver been all Summer?” said Billy Mink. “Nobody seems to have seen him. I went up to his old dam three times, but there wasn’t any pond up there then and I didn’t see anything of him around.”

“He said that he had found a splendid hole in the bank at that time when he came down the Laughing Brook with us in the Spring,” said Spotty the Turtle. “Perhaps he has been hiding there all Summer.”

“Perhaps he hasn’t,” replied Billy Mink scornfully. “Don’t you suppose that with all the traveling I do up and down the Laughing Brook I’d have known of it if he had?”

“Perhaps he was out seeing the Great World like Grandfather Frog,” Jerry Muskrat suggested.

51 STORY 407, 1913.

“If he was, he’ll know enough now never to go again,” grunted Grandfather Frog. Everybody smiled, for it tickled his friends to hear Grandfather Frog insist that he knew all about the Great World when they knew that despite all his adventures, he really had had no more than a peep at a very tiny bit of it. But they couldn’t make Grandfather Frog believe this. No, sirree! He firmly believed that he had seen the Great World and that it wasn’t to be compared with the dear old Smiling Pool.

“Well, I don’t know as it matters much where Paddy the Beaver has been all Summer,” said Little Joe Otter. “What does matter is the fact that he is somewhere up the Laughing Brook this minute, and he says that he is going to make a new pond way back in the Green Forest. I don’t see why the Smiling Pool isn’t good enough for him, but if he wants to take the trouble to make a new pond I don’t know as I have any objections. I wonder if he has begun work yet.”

Jerry Muskrat had been looking very sharply at the bank on which Little Joe was sitting. “I think he has,” said Jerry.

“What makes you think so?” asked Billy Mink. “I think myself that he is just a great big boaster and gave us that warning that he was going to stop the water running in the Laughing Brook just to give us a scare.”

Jerry didn’t reply. He just pointed to the bank. Everybody looked and they could hardly believe their eyes when they saw a wet line running all the way along the bank, which showed that the water was not as high as it had been. They just stared and stared with eyes and mouths wide open, and even while they looked the water dropped ever so little.

“I—I guess he did mean it after all, and he must be at work right now,” said Billy Mink slowly, as if it were hard work to believe what he was saying. “I think it is time we went up to see what is going on.”

With that he started up the Laughing Brook and all the rest followed, that is all but Grandfather Frog. Spotty the Turtle looked back and saw him still sitting on his big green lily-pad. “Aren’t you coming?” he called.

“No,” replied Grandfather Frog. “I was foolish enough to leave the Smiling Pool once and I’ll never do it again no matter what happens.”

And so they left him sitting on his big green lily-pad watching the Smiling Pool grow smaller and smaller. It was strangely still there. There was no one for company, excepting a few of his great-great grandchildren, the Tadpoles. Even the trout had started up the Laughing Brook as if they felt that something was wrong.

“Chugarum!” said Grandfather Frog. “This is dreadful! I hope that Paddy the Beaver will do as he promised and let the water run again when he has made his pond. If he doesn’t I—I—well, I’m going to stay, anyway.”

Paddy Beaver Working Hard

Work, work all the night
While the stars are shining bright;
Work, work all the day,
I have got no time to play.

This little rhyme Paddy the Beaver made up as he toiled at the building of the dam which was to make the pond he so much desired deep in the Green Forest. Of course, it wasn't quite true, that about working all night and all day. Nobody could do that, you know, and keep it up. Everybody has to rest and sleep. Yes, and everybody has to play a little to be at his best. So it wasn't quite true that Paddy worked all day after working all night. But it was true that Paddy had no time to play. He had got too much to do. He had had his playtime during the long summer and now he had got to get ready for the long cold Winter.

Now, of all the little workers in the Green Forest, on the Green Meadows, and in the Smiling Pool none can compare with Paddy the Beaver, not even his cousin, Jerry Muskrat. Happy Jack Squirrel and Striped Chipmunk store up food for the long cold months when rough Brother North Wind and Jack Frost rule, and Jerry Muskrat builds a fine house wherein to keep warm and comfortable, but all this is as nothing to the work of Paddy the Beaver, as you shall see.

As I said before, Paddy had had a long playtime through the Summer. He had wandered up and down the Laughing Brook. He had followed it way up to the place where it started. And all the time he had been studying and studying to make sure that he wanted to stay in the Green Forest. In the first place he had to be sure that there was plenty of the kind of food that he likes. Then he had to be equally sure that he could make a pond close by where this particular food grew. Last of all he had to satisfy himself that if he could make a pond and build a home he would be reasonably safe in it. And all these things he had done in his playtime. Now he was ready to go to work, and when Paddy begins to work, he sticks to it until it is finished. He says that that is the only way to do to succeed, and you know and I know that he is right.

Now Paddy the Beaver can see at night just as Reddy Fox and Peter Rabbit and Bobby Coon can, and he likes the night best because he feels safest then. But he can see in the daytime too, and when he feels that he is perfectly safe and no one is watching he works then, too. Of course, the first thing to do was to build a dam across the Laughing Brook to make the pond he so much needed. He chose a low open place deep in the Green Forest around the edge of which grew many young poplar⁵² trees, the bark of which is his favorite food, and through the middle of this flowed the Laughing Brook. At the lower edge was just the place for a dam. It would not have to be very long and when it was finished and the water was stopped in the Laughing Brook it

52 Changed to "aspen" in book version.

would just have to flow over the low open place and make a pond there. Paddy's eyes twinkled when he saw it. It was right then that he had made up his mind to stay in the Green Forest.

So now that he was ready to begin work, he went up the Laughing Brook to a place where alders and willows grew and there he began work, and that work was the cutting of a great number of trees by means of his great front teeth, which were given him for just this purpose. And as he worked Paddy was happy, for one can never be truly happy who does not work.

(The Adventures of Paddy the Beaver, Chapter 1, "Paddy the Beaver Begins Work")

STORY 541. November 6, 1913

Building the Dam

Paddy the Beaver was busy cutting down trees for the dam he had planned to build. Up in the woods of the North from which he had come to the Green Forest he had learned all about tree cutting and dam building and canal digging and house building. Paddy's father and mother had been very wise in the days of the beaver world, and Paddy had been quick to learn. So now he knew just what to do and the best way of doing it. You know a great many people waste time and labor doing things the wrong way, so that they have to be done over again. They forget to be sure they are right, and go ahead, until they find they are wrong and all their work goes for nothing.

But Paddy the Beaver isn't this kind. Paddy would never have leaped into the spring with the steep sides without looking as Grandfather Frog did⁵³. So now he carefully picked out the trees to cut. He couldn't afford to waste time cutting down a tree that wasn't going to be just what he wanted when it was down. When he was sure that the tree was right, he looked up at the top to be sure that when he had cut it, it would fall clear of other trees. He had learned that when he was quite young and heedless. He remembered just how he had felt when after working hard, o, so hard, to cut a big tree he had warned all his friends to get out of the way so that they would not be hurt when it fell, and then it hadn't fallen at all because the top had caught in another tree. He was so mortified that he didn't get over it for a long time.

So now he made sure that the tree was going to fall clear and just where he wanted it. Then he sat up on his hind legs, and with his great broad tail for a brace began to make the chips fly. You know Paddy has the most wonderful teeth for cutting. They are long and broad and sharp. He would begin by making a deep bite, and then another just a little way below. Then he would pry out the little piece of wood between. When he had cut very deep on one side, so that the tree would fall that way, he would work around to the other side. Just as soon as the tree began to lean and he was sure that it was going to fall he would scamper away so as to be out of danger. He loved to see those tall trees lean slowly forward then faster and faster till they struck the ground with a crash.

53 STORY 532, 1913.

Illustrations. November 3 to November 8, 1913.



538. An Important Meeting at the Smiling Pool
"Of course, you're not afraid," jeered Spotty the Turtle.



539. Smiling Pool is Deserted
"I—I guess he did mean it after all, and he must be at work right now," said Billy Mink.



540. Paddy Beaver Working Hard
That work was the cutting of a great number of trees.



541. Building the Dam
Then he placed the poles side by side.



542. Paddy the Beaver has Many Visitors
Anyway, they simply passed the time of day and hurried on.



543. Sammy Jay Protests
"Hello, Mr. Jay. I see you haven't any better manners than your cousin."

Just as soon as they were down, he would trim off the branches until the trees were just long poles. This was easy work, for he could take off a good- sized branch with one bite. On many he left their bushy tops. When he had trimmed them to suit him, he would tug and pull them down to the place where he meant his dam to be.

There he placed the poles side by side, not across the Laughing Brook like a bridge, but with the big ends pointing up the Laughing Brook, which was quite broad but shallow right there. To keep them from floating away, he rolled stones and piled mud on the bushy ends. Clear across on both sides he laid those poles until the land began to rise. Then he dragged more poles and piled on top of these and wedged short sticks crosswise between them.

And all the time the Laughing Brook was having harder and harder work to run. Its merry laugh grew less merry and finally almost stopped, because, you see, the water could not get through between all those poles and sticks fast enough. It was just about that time that the little people of the Smiling Pool decided that it was time to see just what Paddy was doing, and started up the Laughing Brook, leaving only Grandfather Frog and the Tadpoles in the Smiling Pool, which for a little while would smile no more.

(The Adventures of Paddy the Beaver, Chapter 2, "Paddy Plans a Pond")

STORY 542. November 7, 1913

Paddy the Beaver has Many Visitors

Paddy the Beaver knew perfectly well that he would have visitors just as soon as he began to build his dam. He expected a lot of them. You see, he knew that none of them ever had seen beaver at work unless, perhaps, it was Prickly Porky the Porcupine, who also had come down from the north. So, as he worked, he kept his ears open and he smiled to himself as he heard a little rustle here and then a little rustle there. He knew just what those little rustles meant. Each one meant another visitor. Yes, sir, each rustle meant another visitor, and yet not one had shown himself.

Paddy chuckled. "Seems to me that you are dreadfully afraid to show yourselves," said he in a loud voice, just as if he was talking to nobody in particular. Everything was still. There wasn't so much as a rustle after Paddy spoke. He chuckled again. He could just feel ever so many eyes watching him, though he didn't see a single pair. And he knew that the reason his visitors were hiding so carefully was because they were afraid of him. You see, Paddy was much bigger than most of the little meadow and forest people and they didn't know what kind of a temper he might have. It is always safest to be very distrustful of strangers. That is one of the very first things taught little meadow and forest children.

Of course, Paddy knew all about this. He had been brought up that way. "Be sure and then you'll never be sorry" had been one of his mother's favorite sayings, and he had always remembered it. Indeed, it had saved him a great deal of trouble. So now he was perfectly willing to go right on working and let his hidden visitors watch him until

they were sure he meant them no harm. You see, he himself felt quite sure that none of them was big enough to do him any harm. Little Joe Otter was the only one he had any doubt about, and he felt quite sure that Little Joe wouldn't try to pick a quarrel. So he kept right on cutting trees, trimming off the branches and hauling the trunks down to the dam he was building. Some of them he floated down the Laughing Brook. This was easier.

Now, when the little people of the Smiling Pool, who were the first to find out that Paddy the Beaver had come to the Green Forest, had started up the Laughing Brook to see what he was doing, they had told the Merry Little Breezes where they were going. The Merry Little Breezes had been greatly excited. They couldn't understand how a stranger could have been living in the Green Forest without them knowing it. You see, they quite forgot that they very seldom wandered to the deepest part of the Green Forest. Of course, they started at once as fast as they could go to tell all the other little people who live on or around the Green Meadows, all but Old Man Coyote. For some reason they thought it best not to tell him. They were a little doubtful about Old Man Coyote. He was so big and strong and so sly and smart that all his neighbors were afraid of him. Perhaps the Merry Little Breezes had this fact in mind, and knew that none would dare go call on the stranger if they knew that Old Man Coyote was going, too. Anyway, they simply passed the time of day with Old Man Coyote and hurried on to tell every one else, and it so happens that the very last one they met was Sammy Jay.

Sammy was terribly put out to think that anything should be going on that he didn't know about first. You know, he is great for prying into the affairs of other people, and he loves dearly to boast that there is nothing going on in the Great Forest or on the Green Meadows that he doesn't know about. So now his pride was hurt and he was in a terrible rage as he started after the Merry Little Breezes for the place deep in the Green Forest where they said that Paddy the Beaver was at work. He didn't believe a word of it, but he would see for himself.

(The Adventures of Paddy the Beaver, Chapter 3, "Paddy Has Many Visitors")

STORY 543. November 8, 1913

Sammy Jay Protests

When Sammy Jay reached the place deep in the Green Forest where Paddy the Beaver was hard at work building a dam so as to make a pond, just for his own use, he didn't hide as had the little four-footed people. You see, of course, he had no reason to hide because he felt perfectly safe. Paddy had just cut a big tree and it fell with a crash as Sammy came hurrying up. Sammy was so surprised that for a minute he couldn't find his tongue. He had not supposed that anybody but Farmer Brown or Farmer Brown's boy could cut down so large a tree as that, and it quite took his breath away. But he got it again in a minute. He was boiling with anger anyway to think that he should have been the last to learn that Paddy had come down from the north to make his home in the Green Forest and here was a chance to speak his mind.

"Thief! thief! thief!" he screamed in his harshest voice.

Paddy the Beaver looked up with a twinkle in his eyes. "Hello, Mr Jay! I see you haven't any better manners than your cousin⁵⁴ who lives up where I came from," said he.

"Thief! thief! thief!" screamed Sammy, hopping up and down, he was so angry.

"Meaning yourself, I suppose," said Paddy. "I never did see an honest Jay, and I don't suppose I ever will."

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Peter Rabbit, who had quite forgotten that he was hiding.

"Oh, how do you do, Mr Rabbit? I'm very glad you have called on me this morning," said Paddy, just as if he hadn't known all the time just where Peter was. "Mr Jay seems to have gotten out of the wrong side of his bed this morning."

Peter laughed again. "He always does," said he. "If he didn't, he wouldn't be happy. You wouldn't think it to look at him, but he is happy right now. He doesn't know it, but he is."

Sammy Jay glared down at Peter Rabbit. Then he glared at Paddy the Beaver. And all the time he still shrieked "Thief!" as hard as ever he could. Paddy kept right on working, paying no more attention to Sammy. This made Sammy more angry than ever. He kept coming nearer and nearer until at last he was in the very tree that Paddy happened to be cutting. Paddy's eyes twinkled.

"I'm no thief!" he exclaimed suddenly.

"You are! You are! Thief! Thief!" shrieked Sammy. "You're stealing our trees!"

"They're not your trees," retorted Paddy. "They belong to the Green Forest and the Green Forest belongs to all who love it, and we all have a perfect right to take what we need from it. I need these trees and I've just as much right to take them as you have to take the fat acorns that drop in the Fall."

"No such thing!" screamed Sammy. You know, he can't talk without screaming, and the more excited he gets the louder he screams. "No such thing! Acorns are food. They are meant to eat. I have to have them to live. But you are cutting down whole trees. You are spoiling the Green Forest. You don't belong here. Nobody invited you and nobody wants you. You're a thief!"

Then up spoke Jerry Muskrat, who, you know, is cousin to Paddy the Beaver. "Don't you mind him," said he, pointing to Sammy Jay. "Nobody does. He's the greatest trouble maker and thief in the Green Forest or on the Green Meadows. He would steal from his own relatives. Don't mind what he says, Cousin Paddy."

Now, all this time Paddy had been working away just as if no one was around. Just as Jerry stopped speaking Paddy thumped the ground with his tail, which is his way of warning people to watch out, and suddenly scurried away as fast as he could run. Sammy Jay was so surprised that he couldn't find his tongue for a minute, and he didn't notice anything peculiar about that tree. Then suddenly he felt himself falling. With a frightened scream he spread his wings to fly, but branches on the tree swept him down

54 Canada Jay (*Perisoreus canadensis*)

with them right into the Laughing Brook.

You see, while he had been speaking his mind Paddy the Beaver had cut down the very tree in which he was sitting.

Sammy wasn't hurt, but he was wet and muddy and terribly frightened—the most miserable looking Jay that ever was seen. It was too much for all the little people who were hiding. They just had to laugh. Then they all came out to pay respects to Paddy the Beaver.

(The Adventures of Paddy the Beaver, Chapter 4, “Sammy Jay Speaks his Mind”)

STORY 544. November 10, 1913

The Dam of Paddy the Beaver Grows

Paddy the Beaver kept right on working just as if he hadn't any visitors. You see it is a big undertaking to build a dam. And when that was done there was a house to build and a supply of food for the Winter to cut and store. O, Paddy the Beaver had no time for idle gossip you may be sure! So he kept right on building his dam. It did not look much like a dam at first and some of Paddy's visitors turned up their noses when they first saw it. You see they had heard stories of what a wonderful dam builder Paddy was, and they had expected to see something like the smooth grass-covered bank with which Farmer Brown kept the Big River from running back on his low land. Instead, all they saw was a great pile of poles and sticks, which looked like anything but a dam.

“Pooh!” exclaimed Billy Mink. “I guess we needn't worry about the Laughing Brook and the Smiling Pool if that is the best Paddy can do. Why, the water of the Laughing Brook will work through that in no time.”

Of course, Paddy heard him, but he said nothing—just kept right on working.

“Just look at the way he has laid those sticks,” continued Billy Mink. “Seems as if any one would know enough to lay them across the Laughing Brook, instead of just the other way. I could build a better dam than that!”

Paddy said nothing—just kept right on working.

“Yes, sir,” Billy boasted. “I could build a better dam than that. Why that pile of sticks will never stop the water.”

“Is something the matter with your eyesight, Billy Mink?” inquired Jerry Muskrat.

“Of course not!” retorted Billy indignantly. “Why?”

“Oh, nothing much, only you don't seem to notice that already the Laughing Brook is over its banks above Paddy's dam,” replied Jerry, who had been studying the dam with a great deal of interest.

Billy looked a wee bit foolish, for sure enough there was a little pool just above the dam, and it was growing bigger.

Paddy still kept at work, saying nothing. He was digging in front of the dam now

and the mud and grass he dug up he stuffed in between the ends of the sticks and patted down with his hands.

He did this all along the front of the dam and on top of it, too, wherever it was needed. Of course this made it harder for the water to work through, and the little pond above the dam began to grow faster. It wasn't a great while before it was nearly to the top of the dam, which, at first, of course, was very low. Then Paddy brought more sticks. This was easier now, because he could float them down from the place where he was cutting. He would put them in place on the top of the dam, then hurry for more. Wherever it was needed he would put in mud. He even rolled a few stones in to help hold the mass.

So the dam grew and grew, and so did the pond above the dam. Of course, it took a good many days to build so big a dam; and such a lot of hard work! Every morning the little people of the Green Forest and the Green Meadows would visit it, and every morning they would find that it had grown a great deal in the night, for that is when Paddy prefers to work.

By this time the Laughing Brook had stopped laughing wholly, and down in the Smiling Pool there was hardly water enough for the minnows to feel safe a minute. Billy Mink had stopped making fun of the dam, and all the little people who live in the Laughing Brook and the Smiling Pool were terribly worried.

To be sure Paddy had warned them of what he was going to do, and had promised that just as soon as his pond was big enough the water would once more run in the Laughing Brook. They tried to believe him, but they couldn't help having just a wee bit of fear that he might not be wholly honest. You see they didn't know him, for he was a stranger. Jerry Muskrat was the only one who seemed absolutely sure that everything would be all right. Perhaps that was because Paddy is his cousin and Jerry couldn't help but feel proud of such a big cousin and one who was so smart.

So day by day the dam grew and the pond grew, and then one morning Grandfather Frog down in what had once been the Smiling Pool heard a sound that made his heart jump for joy. It was a murmur that kept growing and growing until at last it was the merry laugh of the Laughing Brook. Then he knew that Paddy had kept his word.

(The Adventures of Paddy the Beaver, Chapter 5, "Paddy Keeps His Promise")

STORY 545. November 11, 1913

Farmer Brown's Boy Grows Curious

Now, it happened that the very day before Paddy the Beaver decided that his pond was big enough and so allowed the water to run in the Laughing Brook once more, Farmer Brown's boy took it into his head to go fishing in the Smiling Pool. Just as usual he went whistling down across the Green Meadows. Somehow when he goes fishing, he always feels like whistling. Grandfather Frog heard him coming and dived into the little bit of water remaining in the Smiling Pool and stirred up the mud at the bottom so that Farmer Brown's boy shouldn't see him. Nearer and nearer drew the

whistle. Suddenly it stopped right short off. Farmer Brown's boy had come in sight of the Smiling Pool, or rather what used to be the Smiling Pool. Now, there wasn't any Smiling Pool, for the very little pool left was too small and sickly looking to smile. There were great banks of mud out of which grew the bulrushes. The lily-pads were forlornly stretched out toward the tiny pool of water remaining. Where the banks were steep and high the holes that Jerry Muskrat and Billy Mink knew so well were plain to see. Over at one side stood Jerry Muskrat's house wholly out of water.

Somehow it seemed to Farmer Brown's boy that he must be dreaming. He never, never, had seen anything like this before, not even in the very driest weather of the hottest part of the Summer. He looked this way and looked that way. The Green Meadows looked just as usual. The Green Forest looked just as usual. The Laughing Brook—ha! What was the matter with the Laughing Brook? He couldn't hear it and that, you know, was very unusual. He dropped his rod and ran over to the Laughing Brook. There wasn't any brook! No, sir, there wasn't any brook—just pools of water with the tiniest of streams trickling between. Big stones over which he had always seen the water running in the prettiest of little white falls were bare and dry. In the little pools frightened minnows were darting about.

Farmer Brown's boy scratched his head in a puzzled way. "I don't understand it at all. Something must have gone wrong with the springs that supply the water for the Laughing Brook. They must have failed. Yes, sir, that is just what must have happened. But I never heard of such a thing happening before and I really don't see how it could happen." He stared up into the Green Forest just as if he thought he could see those springs. Of course, he didn't think anything of the kind. He was just turning it all over in his mind. "I know what I'll do! I'll go up to those springs this afternoon and find out what the trouble is," he said out loud. "They are way over almost on the other side of the Green Forest, and the easiest way to get there will be to start from home and cut across the Old Pasture up to the edge of the mountain behind the Green Forest. If I try to follow up the Laughing Brook now it will take too long because it winds and twists so. Besides, it is too hard work.

With that Farmer Brown's boy went back and picked up his rod. Then he started for home across the Green Meadows, and for once he wasn't whistling. You see, he was too busy thinking. In fact, he was so busy thinking that he didn't see Jimmy Skunk until he almost stepped on him, and then he gave a frightened jump and ran, for without a gun he was just as much afraid of Jimmy as Jimmy was of him when he did have a gun.

Jimmy just grinned and went on about his business. It always tickles Jimmy to see people run away from him, especially people so much bigger than himself, they look so silly.

"I should think that folks would have learned by this time that if they don't bother me I won't bother them," he muttered as he rolled over a stone to look for fat beetles. "Somehow folks never seem to understand me."

(The Adventures of Paddy the Beaver, Chapter 6)

STORY 546. November 12, 1913

Farmer Brown's Boy Gets a Great Surprise

Across the Old Pasture to the feet of the Mountain back of the Green Forest tramped Farmer Brown's boy. Ahead of him trotted Bowser the Hound, sniffing and snuffing for the tracks of Reddy or Granny Fox. Of course, he didn't find them, for Reddy and Granny hadn't been up in the Old Pasture for a long time. But he did find old Jed Thumper, the big gray Rabbit who had made things so uncomfortable for Peter Rabbit once upon a time⁵⁵, and gave him such a fright that old Jed didn't look where he was going and almost ran head first into Farmer Brown's boy.

"Hi, there, you old cottontail!" yelled Farmer Brown's boy, and this frightened Old Jed still more so that he actually ran right past his own castle of bullbriars without seeing it.

Farmer Brown's boy kept on his way laughing at the fright of old Jed Thumper. Presently he came to the springs from which came the water that made the very beginning of the Laughing Brook. He expected to find them dry, for way down on the Green Meadows the Smiling Pool was nearly dry, and the Laughing Brook was nearly dry, and he had supposed that, of course, the reason was that the springs where the Laughing Brook started were no longer bubbling.

But they were! The clear, cold water came bubbling up out of the ground just as it always had and ran off down into the Green Forest in a little stream that would grow and grow as it ran, and become the Laughing Brook. Farmer Brown's boy took off his ragged old straw hat and scowled down at the bubbling water just as if he thought it had no business to be bubbling there.

Of course he didn't think just that. The fact is, he didn't know just what he did think. Here were the springs bubbling away just as they always had. There was the little stream starting off down into the Green Forest with a gurgle that by and by would become a laugh, just as it always had. And yet down on the Green Meadows on the other side of the Green Forest there was no longer a Laughing Brook or a Smiling Pool. He felt as if he ought to pinch himself to make sure that he was awake and not dreaming.

"I don't know what it means," said he, talking out loud. "No, sir, I don't know what it means at all, but I'm going to find out. There's a cause for everything in this world, and when a fellow doesn't know a thing, it is his business to find out all about it. I'm going to find out what has happened to the Laughing Brook if it takes me a year!"

With that he started to follow the little stream which ran gurgling down into the Green Forest. He had followed that little stream more than once, and now he found it just as he remembered it. The farther it ran the larger it grew, until at last it became the Laughing Brook merrily tumbling over rocks and making deep pools in which the trout loved to hide. At last he came to the edge of a little open hollow in the very heart of the Green Forest. He knew what splendid deep holes there were in the Laughing Brook

55 STORY 450, 1913.

here, and how the big trout loved to lie in them because they were deep and cool. He was thinking of these trout now and wishing that he had brought along his fishing rod. He pushed his way through a thicket of alders and then—Farmer Brown’s boy stopped suddenly and fairly gasped. He had to stop because there right in front of him was a pond!

He rubbed his eyes and looked again. Then he stopped down and put his hand in the water to see if it was real. There was no doubt about it. It was real water—a real pond where there never had been a pond before. It was very still, there in the heart of the Green Forest. It was always very still there, but it seemed stiller than usual as he tramped around the edge of this strange pond. He felt as if it were all a dream. He wondered if pretty soon he wouldn’t wake up and find it all untrue. But he didn’t, and so he kept on tramping until presently he came to a dam—a splendid dam of logs and sticks and mud. Over the top of it the water was running, and down in the Green Forest below he could hear the Laughing Brook just beginning to laugh once more. Farmer Brown’s boy sat down with his elbows on his knees and his chin in his hands. He was almost too much surprised to even think.

(The Adventures of Paddy the Beaver, Chapter 7, “Farmer Brown’s Boy Gets Another Surprise”)

STORY 547. November 13, 1913

Peter Rabbit Gets a Ducking

Farmer Brown’s boy sat with his chin in his hands staring at the new pond in the Green Forest and at the dam that had made it. That dam puzzled him. Who could have built it? What did they build it for? Why hadn’t he heard them chopping? He looked carelessly at the stump of one of the trees, and then a still more puzzled look made deep furrows between his eyes. It looked—yes, it looked very much as if teeth and not an axe had cut down the tree. Farmer Brown’s boy stared and stared, his mouth gaping open. He looked so funny that Peter Rabbit, who was hiding under an old pile of brush close by, nearly laughed right out.

But Peter didn’t laugh. No, sir, Peter didn’t laugh, for just that very minute something happened. Sniff! Sniff! That was right behind him at the very edge of the old brush pile, and every hair on Peter stood on end with fright.

“Bow, wow, wow!” It seemed to Peter that that great voice was right in his very ears. It frightened him so that he just had to jump. He didn’t have time to think. And so he jumped right out from under the pile of brush and, of course, right into plain sight. And the very instant he jumped there came another great roar behind him. Of course, it was from Bowser the Hound. You see, Bowser had been following the trail of his master, but as he always stops to sniff at everything he passes, he had been some distance behind. When he came to the pile of brush under which Peter was hiding, he had sniffed at that, and, of course, he had smelled. Peter right away.

Now, when Peter jumped out so suddenly, he had landed right at one end of the

dam. The second roar of Bowser's great voice frightened him still more and he jumped right up on the dam. There was nothing for him to do now but go across, and it wasn't the best of going. No, indeed, it wasn't the best of going. You see it was mostly a tangle of sticks. Happy Jack Squirrel or Chatterer the Red Squirrel or Striped Chipmunk would have skipped across it without the least trouble. But Peter Rabbit has no sharp little claws with which to cling to logs and sticks, and right away he was in a peck of trouble. He slipped down between the sticks, scrambled out, slipped again, and then, trying to make a long jump, he lost his balance and—tumbled heels over head into the water!

Poor Peter Rabbit! He gave himself up for lost this time. He could swim, but at best he is a poor swimmer and doesn't like the water. He couldn't dive and keep out of sight like Jerry Muskrat or Billy Mink. All he could do was to paddle as fast as his legs would go. The water had gone up his nose and down his throat so that he choked, and all the time he felt sure that Bowser the Hound would plunge in after him and catch him. And if he shouldn't, why, Farmer Brown's boy would simply wait for him to come ashore and catch him.

But Farmer Brown's boy didn't do anything of the kind. No, sir, he didn't. Instead, he shouted to Bowser and called him away. Bowser didn't want to come, but he long ago learned to obey, so very slowly he walked over to where his master was sitting.

"You know it wouldn't be fair, old fellow, to try to catch Peter now. It wouldn't be fair at all, and we never want to do anything unfair, do we?" said he. Perhaps Bowser didn't agree, but he wagged his tail as if he did and sat down beside his master to watch Peter swim.

It seemed to Peter as if he never, never would reach the shore, though really it was only a very little distance that he had to swim. When he did scramble out, he was a sorry looking rabbit. He didn't waste any time, but started for home as fast as he could go, lipperty, lipperty, lip. And Farmer Brown's boy and Bowser the Hound just laughed and didn't try to catch him at all.

"Well, I never!" exclaimed Sammy Jay, who had seen it all from the top of a pine tree. "Well, I never! I guess Farmer Brown's boy isn't so bad after all."

(The Adventures of Paddy the Beaver, Chapter 8)

STORY 548. November 14, 1913

Paddy the Beaver Plans a House

Paddy the Beaver sat on the dam he had built deep in the Green Forest and his eyes shone with happiness as he looked out over the shining water of the pond he had made. All around the edge of it grew the tall trees of the Green Forest. It was very beautiful and very still and very lonesome. That is, it would have seemed lonesome to almost any one but Paddy the Beaver. But Paddy is never lonesome. You see he finds company in the trees and flowers and all the little plants.

He loves the Forest's quiet heart
Where strife and worry have no part.

It was still, very, very still. Over on one side was a beautiful rosy glow in the water. It was the reflection from jolly, round, red Mr. Sun. Paddy couldn't see him because of the tall trees, but he knew exactly what Mr. Sun was doing. He was going to bed behind the Purple Hills. Pretty soon the little stars would come out and twinkle down at him. He loves the little stars and always watches for the first one.

Yes, Paddy the Beaver was very happy. He would have been perfectly happy but for one thing, Farmer Brown's boy had found his dam and pond that very afternoon and Paddy wasn't quite sure of what Farmer Brown's boy might do. He had kept himself snugly hidden while Farmer Brown's boy was there, and he felt quite sure that Farmer Brown's boy didn't know who had built the dam. But for this very reason he might, he just might try to find out all about it, and that would mean that Paddy would have to be always on the watch.

"But what's the use of worrying over troubles that haven't come yet, and may never come? Time enough to worry when they do come," said Paddy to himself, which shows that Paddy has a great deal of wisdom in his little brown head. "The thing for me to do now is to get ready for Winter and that means a great deal of work," he continued. "Let me see, I've got to build a house, a big, stout, warm house, where I will be snug and safe when my pond is frozen over. And I've got to lay in a supply of food, enough to last me until gentle Sister South Wind comes to prepare the way for lovely Mistress Spring. My, my, I can't afford to be sitting here dreaming when there is such a lot to be done!"

With that Paddy slipped into the water and swam all around his new pond to make sure of just the best place to build his house. Now placing one's house in just the right place is a very important matter. Some people are dreadfully careless about this matter. Jimmy Skunk, for instance, often makes the mistake of digging his house (you know Jimmy makes his house underground), right where every one who happens along that way will see it. Perhaps that is because Jimmy is so independent that he doesn't care who knows where he lives. Johnny Chuck used to be careless until he met Polly Chuck, and then when he built a house for her, he was very careful.

But Paddy the Beaver never is careless. He always chooses just the very best place. He makes sure that it is best before he begins. So now, although he was quite positive of just where his house should be, he swam around the pond to make doubly sure. Then when he was quite satisfied he swam over to the place he had chosen. It was where the water was quite deep.

"There mustn't be the least chance that the ice will ever get thick enough to close up my doorway," said he, "and I'm sure it never will here. I must make the foundations strong and the walls thick. I must have plenty of mud to plaster with, and inside, up above the water, I must have the snuggest, warmest little room, where I can sleep in comfort. This is the place to build it and it is high time I was at work."

With that Paddy swam over to the place where he had cut the trees for his dam and

Illustrations. November 10 to November 15, 1913.



544. The Dam of Paddy the Beaver Grows

He would put them in place on the top of the dam, then hurry for more.



545. Farmer Brown's Boy Grows Curious

Somehow it seemed to Farmer Brown's boy that he must be dreaming.



546. Farmer Brown's Boy Gets a Great Surprise

"I don't know what it means," said he, talking out loud. "No, sir; I don't know what it means at all, but I'm going to find out."



547. Peter Rabbit gets a Ducking
He lost his balance and tumbled head over heels into the water.



548. Paddy the Beaver Plans a House

But what's the use of worrying over troubles that haven't come yet, and may never come.



549. Paddy the Beaver's House
"All right," replied Paddy, "That will be fine. You can bring mud while I am getting the sticks and grass."

his heart was light, for he had long ago learned that the surest way to be happy is to be busy.

(The Adventures of Paddy the Beaver, Chapter 9, "Paddy Plans a House")

STORY 549. November 15, 1913

Paddy the Beaver's House

Jerry Muskrat was very much interested when he found that Paddy the Beaver, who, you know, is his cousin, was building a house. Jerry is a house builder himself, and right down deep in his heart he very much doubted if Paddy could build as good a house as he could. His house was down in the Smiling Pool, and Jerry thought it a very wonderful house, indeed, and was very proud of it. It was built of mud and sod and little alder and willow twigs and bulrushes. Jerry had spent one Winter in it and he had decided to spend another there after he had fixed it up a little. So as long as he hadn't got to build a brand new one he could afford the time to watch his cousin Paddy. Perhaps he hoped that Paddy would ask his advice.

But Paddy did nothing of the kind. He had seen Jerry Muskrat's house, and he had smiled. But he had taken great pains not to let Jerry see that smile. He wouldn't have hurt Jerry's feelings for the world. He is too polite and good-natured to do anything like that. So Jerry sat on the end of a log and watched Paddy work. The first thing to do was to build the foundation. This was of mud and grass, with sticks worked into it to hold it together. Paddy dug the mud from the bottom of his new pond. And because the pond was new, of course there was a great deal of grassy sod there, which was just what Paddy needed. It was very convenient.

Jerry watched a little while, and then, because Jerry is a worker himself, he Just had to get busy and help. Rather timidly he told his big cousin that he would like to have a share in building the new house.

"All right," replied Paddy, "that will be fine. You can bring mud while I am getting the sticks and grass."

So Jerry dived down to the bottom of the pond and dug up mud and piled it on the foundation and was happy. The little stars looked down and twinkled merrily as they watched the two workers. So the foundation grew and grew down under the water. Jerry was very much surprised at the size of it. It was ever and ever so much bigger than the foundation for his own house. You see, he had forgotten how much bigger Paddy was. Of course, he would need a much bigger house.

So each night Jerry and Paddy worked, resting during the daytime. Occasionally Bobby Coon or Reddy Fox or Unc' Billy Possum or Jimmy Skunk would come to the edge of the pond to see what was going on. Peter Rabbit came every night. But they couldn't see much, because, you know, Paddy and Jerry were working under water.

But at last Peter was rewarded. There just above the water was a splendid platform of mud and grass and sticks. There were a great many sticks carefully laid as soon as

the platform was above the water, for Paddy was very particular about this. You see, it was to be the floor for the splendid room he was planning to build. When it suited him, he began to pile mud in the very middle.

Jerry couldn't understand this. He puzzled and puzzled over it, while he helped to bring the mud. Where was Paddy's room going to be if he piled up the mud that way? But he didn't like to ask questions, so he kept right on helping. Paddy would dive down to the bottom and then come up with double handfuls of mud which he held against his chest. He would scramble out onto the platform and waddle over to the pile in the middle, where he would put the mud and pat it down. Then back to the bottom for more mud.

And so the mud pile grew and grew until it was quite two feet high. "Now," said Paddy, "I'll build the walls and I guess you can't help me much with those. I'm going to begin them tomorrow night. Perhaps you will like to see me do it, Cousin Jerry."

"I certainly will," replied Jerry, still puzzling over that pile of mud in the middle.

(The Adventures of Paddy the Beaver, Chapter 10, "Paddy Starts his House")

STORY 550. November 17, 1913

More About Building of Paddy's House

Jerry Muskrat was more and more sure that his big cousin, Paddy the Beaver, didn't know quite so much as he might about house building. Jerry would have liked to offer some suggestions, but he didn't dare. You see he was very anxious not to displease his big cousin. But he felt that he had simply got to speak his mind to some one, so he swam across to where he had seen Peter Rabbit almost every night since Paddy began to build. Sure enough Peter was there, sitting up very straight and staring with big round eyes at the platform of mud and sticks out in the water where Paddy the Beaver was at work.

"Well, Peter, what do you think of it?" asked Jerry.

"What is it?" asked Peter innocently. "Is it another dam?"

Jerry threw back his head and laughed and laughed.

Peter looked at him suspiciously. "I don't see anything to laugh at," said he.

"Why, it's a house, you stupid. It's Paddy the Beaver's new house," replied Jerry, wiping the tears of laughter from his eyes.

"I'm not stupid!" retorted Peter. "How was I to know that that pile of mud and sticks is meant for a house? It certainly doesn't look it. Where is the door?"

"To tell you the truth. I don't think it is much of a house myself," replied Jerry. "It has got a door, all right. In fact, it has got three. You can't see them because they are under water and there is a passage from each right up through that platform of mud and sticks, which is the foundation of the house. It really is a very fine foundation, Peter; it really is. But what I can't understand is what Paddy is thinking of by building that great

pile of mud right in the middle. When he gets his walls built, where will his bedroom be? There won't be any bedroom. There won't be any room at all. It won't be a house at all—just a big, useless pile of sticks and mud.”

Peter scratched his head and then pulled his whiskers thoughtfully as he looked out to where Paddy was hard at work.

“It certainly does look queer, very queer indeed,” said Peter. “I guess Paddy isn't as smart as we thought he was. Well, I must be moving along; I've important business to attend to.”

Jerry grinned. He knew just what that important business was. It was to tell everyone he met how stupid Paddy the Beaver was to build a house with no room in it. Meanwhile Paddy kept right on working. He brought willow and alder poles and bushy branches. These he stood so that the big ends rested on the platform, while they leaned against the pile of mud in the middle. He went all the way around in this way and by and by the pile of mud in the middle couldn't be seen at all. It was wholly covered with the poles and branches, and the tops of these were all fastened together.

Jerry puzzled and puzzled over it. If only it had a room in it, it would be a splendid house. But there wasn't any room because the walls of sticks and branches came right up against that great pile of mud in the middle. It looked to Jerry as if his cousin Paddy had done a lot of hard work for nothing. He wished that Paddy had asked his advice. He could have told him what a mistake he was making. “I guess Paddy isn't such a wonderfully smart fellow as I thought he was,” said Jerry with a sigh.

(Significantly rewritten for *The Adventures of Paddy the Beaver*, Chapter 11, “Peter Rabbit and Jerry Muskrat are Puzzled”)

STORY 551. November 18, 1913

Jerry Muskrat Learns Something

If you think you know it all
You are riding for a fall.
Use your ears and use your eyes,
But hold your tongue and you'll be wise.

Jerry Muskrat will tell you that that is as true as true can be.

Jerry knows. He found it out for himself. Now he is very careful what he says about other people or what they are doing. But he wasn't so careful when his cousin, Paddy the Beaver was building his house. No, sir, Jerry wasn't so careful then. He thought he knew more about building a house than Paddy did. He was sure of it when he watched Paddy heap up a great pile of mud right in the middle where his room ought to be, and then build a wall of sticks around it. He said as much to Peter Rabbit.

Now, it is never safe to say anything to Peter Rabbit that you don't care to have others know. Peter has a great deal of respect for Jerry Muskrat's opinion on house building. You see, he very much admires Jerry's snug house in the Smiling Pool. It

really is a very fine house, and Jerry may be excused for being proud of it. But that doesn't excuse Jerry for thinking that he knows all there is to know about house building. Of course, Peter told every one he met that Paddy the Beaver was making a foolish mistake in building his house, and that Jerry Muskrat, who ought to know, said so.

So whenever they got the chance the little people of the Green Forest and the Green Meadows would steal up to the shore of Paddy's new pond deep in the Green Forest and chuckle as they looked out at the great pile of sticks and mud which Paddy had built for a house, but in which he had forgotten to make a room. At least they supposed that he had forgotten this very important thing. He must have, for there wasn't any room. It was a great joke. They laughed a lot about it, and they lost a great deal of the respect for Paddy the Beaver which they had had since he built his wonderful dam.

Jerry and Peter sat in the moonlight talking it over. Paddy had stopped bringing sticks for his wall. He had dived down out of sight and he was gone a long time. Suddenly Jerry noticed that the water had grown very, very muddy all around Paddy's new house. He wrinkled his brows trying to think what Paddy could be doing. Presently Paddy came up for air. Then he went down again and the water grew muddier than ever. This went on for a long time. Every little while Paddy would come up for air and a few minutes of rest. Then down he would go and the water would grow muddier and muddier.

At last Jerry could stand it no longer. He just had to see what was going on. He slipped into the water and swam over to where the water was muddiest. Just as he got there up came Paddy.

"Hello, Cousin Jerry!" said he. "I was just going to invite you over to see what you think of my house inside. Just follow me."

Paddy dived and Jerry dived after him. He followed Paddy in at one of the three doorways under water and up a smooth hall right into the biggest nicest bedroom Jerry had ever been in in all his life. He just gasped in sheer surprise. He couldn't do anything else. He couldn't find his tongue to say a word. Here he was in this splendid great room up above the water, and he had been so sure that there wasn't any room there! He just didn't know what to make of it.

Paddy's eyes twinkled. "Well," said he. "What do you think of it?"

"I—I think it is splendid. Just perfectly splendid! But I don't understand it at all, Cousin Paddy. I—I where is that great pile of mud I helped you build in the middle?" Jerry looked as foolish as he felt when he asked this.

"Why, I've dug it all away. That's what made the water so muddy," replied Paddy.

"But what did you build it for in the first place?" Jerry persisted.

"Because I had to have something to rest my sticks against while I was building my walls, of course," replied Paddy. "When I got the tops fastened together for a roof, they didn't need a support any longer, and then I dug it away to make this room. I

couldn't have built such a big room any other way. I see you don't know very much about house building, Cousin Jerry."

"I—I'm afraid I don't," confessed Jerry sadly.

(The Adventures of Paddy the Beaver, Chapter 12)

STORY 552. November 19, 1913

Paddy the Beaver Finishes his House

"Is your house all done?" asked Jerry Muskrat as he sat in the splendid great bedroom of Paddy the Beaver's new house.

"No," replied Paddy. "O, my, no! It must be plastered and I must have a nice bed. This floor is too muddy; it wouldn't do at all. It would be damp and uncomfortable in cold weather, so I must have a bed that will be dry, for, you know, I will spend most of my time here when my pond is frozen over."

"Yes, I know," replied Jerry. You see, he spends the Winter in much the same way in his own snug house in the Smiling Pool.

"And so I guess it is time for me to get to work again," added Paddy.

"Can I help you?" asked Jerry.

Paddy thought for a few minutes. "I guess you can help me plaster if you like, and I will be ever so much obliged to you for your help," said he. With that he led the way down one of the smooth halls into the water. He scooped up both hands full of mud and Jerry did the same. Then they rose to the surface and Paddy plastered the mud on the outside of the walls.

How they worked! You see Paddy insisted that his walls must be very thick. He brought brushy tops of trees and pieces of sod and worked them into the framework he had built. And mud—such a lot of mud! He plastered it all over the walls and roof, and the walls grew thicker and thicker. The top of the roof he did not plaster so thickly. Jerry noticed it and he knew right away why. It was because Paddy needed a little air down in that splendid great room, and it would have to come in through the top of the roof. So Paddy left little breathing places. You wouldn't have known it from the outside, but they were there just the same.

"Now," said Paddy as he patted the last mud ball into place, "that's what I call a real house. Old Jack Frost and rough Brother North Wind can freeze things as hard as they please for all I care. They can't reach me in there. Yes, sir, that's what I call a good house. What do you think about it, Cousin Jerry?"

"I think it is a perfectly splendid house, Cousin Paddy. I do, indeed! I wish. I wish—" Jerry stopped and looked a little bit confused.

"What do you wish?" asked Paddy.

"I—I—I wish I hadn't said things about your housebuilding," replied Jerry,

hanging his head. “You see, I laughed at you and I told Peter Rabbit how you had built a house without a room, and I guess he has told every one else and everybody is laughing about it. You see, I didn’t know you were going to take out that big pile of mud in the middle. Now no one can see that splendid great room excepting Billy Mink and Little Joe Otter, because no one else can swim and dive.”

“And I don’t think that Little Joe Otter or Billy Mink will see it either unless they come when I am not at home, and you know I seldom go very far away. It is because I don’t want visitors that I built my house way out here,” said Paddy.

“I—I’m ashamed to think I boasted of knowing more about housebuilding than you do,” went on Jerry. “I’ve learned a lot, and this is the most wonderful house I have ever seen.”

Paddy looked pleased. “This is nothing. You ought to see some of the houses that I have helped build up in the North, where I came from,” said he. “Now I must get busy and lay in a supply of food for the Winter, and that means a whole lot of work.”

“Can I help?” asked Jerry.

Paddy smiled. “I’m afraid not,” he replied. “But you can watch if you want to.”

STORY 553. November 20, 1913

The Queer Storehouse of Paddy the Beaver

Everybody knew that Paddy the Beaver was laying up a supply of food for the Winter and everybody thought it was queer food. That is, everybody but Prickly Porky the Porcupine thought so. Prickly Porky likes the same kind of food, but he never lays up a supply. He just goes out and gets it when he wants it, Winter or Summer. What kind of food is it? Why, bark, to be sure. Yes, sir, it was just bark—the bark of certain kinds of trees.

Now Prickly Porky can climb the trees and eat the bark right there, but Paddy the Beaver cannot climb, and if he should just eat the bark that he can reach from the ground it would take such a lot of trees to keep him filled up that he would soon spoil the Green Forest. You know when the bark is taken off a tree all the way around the tree dies. That is because all the things that a tree draws out of the ground to make it grow and keep it alive are carried up from the roots in the sap, and the sap cannot go up the tree trunks and into the branches when the bark is taken off because it is up the inside of the bark that it travels. So when the bark is taken from a tree all the way around the trunk the tree just starves to death.

Now, Paddy the Beaver loves the Green Forest as dearly as you and I do, and perhaps even a little more dearly. You see it is his home. Besides, Paddy never is wasteful. So he cuts down a tree so that he can get all the bark instead of killing a whole lot of trees for a very little bark, as he might do if he were lazy. There isn’t a lazy bone in him—not one. The bark he likes best is from the aspen. When he cannot get that he will eat the bark from the poplar, the alder, the willow, and even the birch. But

he likes the aspen so much better that he will work very hard to get it. Perhaps it tastes better because he does have to work so hard for it.

There were some aspen trees growing right on the edge of the pond Paddy had made in the Green Forest. These he cut just as he had cut the trees for his dam. As soon as a tree was down, he would cut it into short lengths and with these swim out to where the water was deep, close to his new house. He took them one by one and carried the first ones to the bottom, where he pushed them into the mud just enough to hold them. Then as fast as he brought more he piled them on the first ones. And so the pile grew and grew.

Jerry Muskrat, Peter Rabbit, Bobby Coon and other little people of the Green Forest watched him with the greatest interest and curiosity. They couldn't quite make out what he was doing. It was almost as if he was building the foundation for another house.

"What's he doing, Jerry?" demanded Peter when he could keep still no longer.

"I don't exactly know," replied Jerry. "He said that he was going to lay in a supply of food for the Winter, just as I told you, and I suppose that is what he is doing, but I don't quite understand what he is taking it all out into the pond for. I believe I'll go ask him."

"Do, and then come tell us," begged Peter, who was growing so furious that he couldn't sit still.

So Jerry swam out to where Paddy was so busy. "Is this your food supply, Cousin Paddy?" he asked.

"Yes," replied Paddy, crawling up on the side of his home to rest. "Yes, this is my food supply. Isn't it splendid?"

"I guess it is," replied Jerry, trying to be polite, "though I like lily roots and clams better. But what are you going to do with it? Where is your storehouse?"

"This pond is my storehouse," replied Paddy. "I will make a great pile right here close to my house and the water will keep it nice and fresh all Winter. When the pond is frozen over all I have to do is to slip out of one of my doorways down here on the bottom, swim over here and get a stick and fill my stomach. Isn't it handy?"

(The Adventures of Paddy the Beaver, Chapter 13, "The Queer Storehouse")

STORY 554. November 21, 1913

A Footprint in the Mud

Very early one morning Paddy the Beaver heard Sammy Jay making a terrible fuss over in the aspen trees on the edge of the pond Paddy had made in the Green Forest. Paddy couldn't see because he was inside his house and it had no windows, but he could hear. He wrinkled up his brows thoughtfully.

"Seems to me that Sammy is very much excited this morning," said he, talking to

himself, a way he has because he is so much alone. “When he screams like that Sammy is usually trying to do two things at once—make trouble for somebody and keep somebody else out of trouble; and when you come to think of it, that’s rather a funny way of doing. It shows that he isn’t all bad and at the same time he is a long way from being all good. Now I should say from the sounds that Sammy has discovered Reddy Fox trying to steal up on some one over where my aspen trees are growing. Reddy is afraid of me, but I suspect that he knows that Peter Rabbit has been hanging around here a lot lately watching me work, and he thinks perhaps he can catch Peter. I shall have to whisper in one of Peter’s long ears and tell him to watch out.”

After a while he heard Sammy Jay’s voice growing fainter and fainter in the Green Forest. Finally, he couldn’t hear it at all. “Whoever was there has gone away and Sammy has followed just to torment him,” thought Paddy.

He was very busy making a bed. He is very particular about his bed, is Paddy the Beaver. He makes it of fine splinters of wood which he splits off with those wonderful great cutting teeth of his. This makes the driest kind of a bed. It requires a great deal of patience and work, but patience is one of the first things a little beaver learns, and honest work well done is one of the greatest pleasures in the world, as Paddy long ago found out for himself. So he kept at work on his bed for some time after all was still outside.

At last Paddy decided that he would go over to his aspen trees and look them over to decide which ones he would cut the next night. He slid down one of his long halls, out the doorway at the bottom of the pond and then swam up to the surface where he floated for a few minutes with just his head out of water. And all the time his eyes and nose and ears were busy looking, smelling and listening for any sign of danger. Everything was still. Sure that he was quite safe, Paddy swam across to the place where the aspen trees grew and waddled out on the shore.

Paddy looked this way and looked that way. He looked up in the tree tops and he looked off up the hill, but most of all he looked at the ground. Yes, sir, Paddy just studied the ground. You see he hadn’t forgotten the fuss Sammy Jay had been making there and he was trying to find out what it was all about. At first he didn’t see anything unusual, but by and by he happened to notice a little wet place, and right in the middle of it was something that made Paddy’s eyes open wide. It was a footprint. Someone had carelessly stepped in the mud.

“Ha!” exclaimed Paddy, and the hair on his back lifted ever so little and for a minute he had a prickly feeling all over. The footprint was very much like that of Reddy Fox, only it was larger. “Ha!” said Paddy again. “That certainly is the footprint of Old Man Coyote! I see I have got to watch out more sharply than I had thought for. All right, Mr Coyote, now that I know you are about, you’ll have to be smarter than I think you are to catch me. You certainly will be back here tonight looking for me, so I think I’ll do my cutting right now in the daytime.”

(The Adventures of Paddy the Beaver, Chapter 14)

Illustrations. November 17 to November 22, 1913.



550. More About Building of Paddy's House
"That wouldn't trouble me if he was my cousin," said he.



551. Jerry Muskrat Learns Something
"Now, it is never safe to say anything to Peter Rabbit that you don't care to have others know."



552. Paddy the Beaver Finishes his House
"I think it a perfectly splendid house, Cousin Paddy."



553. The Queer Storehouse of Paddy the Beaver
As soon as a tree was down he would cut it into short lengths.



554. A Footprint in the Mud
And right in the middle of it was something that made Paddy's eyes wide open.



555. Sammy Jay Makes Paddy a Call
"O, who is it?" he begged.

Sammy Jay Makes Paddy a Call

Paddy the Beaver was hard at work. He had just cut down a good-sized aspen tree and now he was cutting it up into short lengths to put in his food pile in the pond. As he worked Paddy was doing a lot of thinking. You see, he had found the footprint of Old Man Coyote in a little patch of mud, and he knew what that meant. It meant that Old Man Coyote had discovered his pond and that now he would be hanging around hoping to catch Paddy off his guard. Yes, sir, that is what that footprint in the mud meant. Paddy knew it just as well as if Old Man Coyote had told him so. That was why he was at work cutting his food supply in the daytime. Usually he works at night, and he knew that Old Man Coyote knew it.

“He’ll try to catch me then,” thought Paddy, “so I’ll do my work on land now and fool him.”

The tree he was cutting began to sway and crack. Paddy cut out one more big chip and then hurried away to a safe place while the tree fell with a crash.

“Thief! Thief! Thief!” screamed a voice just back of Paddy.

“Hello, Sammy Jay! I see you don’t feel any better than usual this morning,” said Paddy. “Don’t you want to sit up in this tree while I cut it down?”

Sammy grew black in the face with anger, for he knew that Paddy was laughing at him. You see, only a few days before he had been so intent on calling Paddy bad names that he actually hadn’t noticed that Paddy cutting the very tree in which he was sitting, and so when it fell Sammy had had a terrible fall⁵⁶. He had been the laughing stock of the Green Forest and the Green Meadows ever since.

“You think you are very smart, Mr Beaver, but you’ll think differently one of these fine days!” screamed Sammy. “If you knew what I know you wouldn’t be so well satisfied with yourself.”

“What do you know?” asked Paddy, pretending to be very much alarmed.

“I’m not going to tell you what I know,” retorted Sammy Jay. “You’ll find out soon enough. And when you do find out you’ll never steal another tree from our Green Forest. Somebody is going to catch you, and it isn’t Farmer Brown’s boy, either!”

Paddy pretended to be terribly frightened. “O, who is it? Please tell me, Mr Jay,” he begged.

Now to be called Mr. Jay made Sammy feel very important. Nearly everybody else called him Sammy. He swelled himself out trying to look as important as he felt, and his eyes snapped with pleasure. He was actually making Paddy the Beaver afraid. At least he thought he was.

“No, sir, I won’t tell you,” he replied. “I wouldn’t be you for a good deal!”

⁵⁶ STORY 543, 1913.

Somebody who is smarter than you are is going to catch you, and when he gets through with you there won't be anything left but a few bones. No, sir, nothing but a few bones!"

"O, Mr. Jay, this is terrible news! Whatever am I to do?" cried Paddy, at the time, keeping right on at work cutting another tree.

"There's nothing you can do," replied Sammy, grinning wickedly at Paddy's fright. "There's nothing you can do unless you go right straight back to the North, where you came from. You think you are very smart, but—"

Sammy didn't finish. Crack! Over fell the tree Paddy had been cutting and the top of it fell straight into the alder in which Sammy was sitting. "O! O! Help!" shrieked Sammy, spreading his wings and flying away just in time.

Paddy sat down and laughed until his sides ached. "Come make me another call some day, Sammy!" he called. "And when you do, please bring some real news. I know all about Old Man Coyote. You can tell him for me that when he is planning to catch people he should be careful not to leave footprints to give himself away."

Sammy didn't reply. He just sneaked off through the Green Forest looking quite as foolish as he felt.

(The Adventures of Paddy the Beaver, Chapter 15)

STORY 556. November 24, 1913

Old Man Coyote is Very Crafty

Coyote has a crafty brain;
His wits are sharp his ends to gain.

There is nothing in the world more true than this. Old Man Coyote has the craftiest brain of all the little people of the Green Forest or the Green Meadows. Sharp as are the wits of old Granny Fox, they are not quite as sharp as the wits of Old Man Coyote. If you want to fool him you will have to get up early in the morning and then it is more than likely that you will be the one fooled, not he. There is very little going on around him that he doesn't know about. But once in a while something escapes him. The coming of Paddy the Beaver to the Green Forest was one of these things. He didn't know a thing about Paddy until Paddy had finished his dam and was cutting his supply of food for the Winter.

You see it was this way: When the Merry Little Breezes of Old Mother West Wind first heard the news of what was going on in the Green Forest and hurried around over the Green Meadows and through the Green Forest to spread the news as is their way, they took the greatest pains not to even hint it to Old Man Coyote, because they were afraid that he would make trouble and perhaps drive Paddy away. The place that Paddy had chosen to build his dam was so deep in the Green Forest that Old Man Coyote seldom went that way. So it was that he knew nothing about Paddy, and Paddy knew nothing about him for some time.

But after a while Old Man Coyote noticed that the little people of the Green Meadows were not about as much as usual. They seemed to have a secret of some kind. He mentioned the matter to his friend, Digger the Badger.

Digger had been so intent on his own affairs that he hadn't noticed anything unusual, but when Old Man Coyote mentioned the matter he remembered that Blacky the Crow headed straight for the Green Forest every morning, and several times he had seen Sammy Jay flying in the same direction as if in a great hurry to get somewhere.

Old Man Coyote grinned. "That's all I need to know, friend Digger," said he. "When Blacky the Crow and Sammy Jay visit a place more than once, something interesting is going on there. I think I'll take a stroll up through the Green Forest and look around."

With that, off Old Man Coyote started. But he was too sly and crafty to go straight to the Green Forest. He pretended to hunt around over the Green Meadows, just as he usually did, all the time working nearer and nearer to the Green Forest. When he reached the edge of it, he slipped in among the trees, and when he felt sure that no one was likely to see him he began to run this way and that way with his nose to the ground.

"Ha!" he exclaimed presently, "Reddy Fox has been this way lately."

Pretty soon he found another trail. "So," said he, "Peter Rabbit has been over here a good deal of late and his trail goes in the same direction as that of Reddy Fox. I guess all I have to do now is to follow Peter's trail and it will lead me to what I want to find out."

So Old Man Coyote followed Peter's trail and so presently came to the pond of Paddy the Beaver. "Ha!" said he as he looked out and saw Paddy's new house. "So there is a newcomer to the Green Forest! I have always heard that Beaver is very good eating. My stomach begins to feel empty this very minute." His mouth began to water and a fierce hungry look shone in his yellow eyes.

It was just then that Sammy Jay saw him and began to scream at the top of his lungs, so that Paddy the Beaver over in his new house heard him. Old Man Coyote knew that it was of no use to stay with Sammy Jay about, so he took a hasty look about and found where Paddy came ashore to cut his food. Then, shaking his fist at Sammy Jay he started straight back for the Green Meadows. "I'll just pay a visit here in the night," said he, "and give Mr Beaver a surprise while he is at work."

But with all his craft Old Man Coyote didn't notice that he had left a footprint in the mud.

(The Adventures of Paddy the Beaver, Chapter 16)

Old Man Coyote is Disappointed

Old Man Coyote lay stretched out in his favorite napping place on the Green Meadows. He was thinking of what he had found out up there in the Green Forest that morning—that Paddy the Beaver was living there. Old Man Coyote's thoughts were very pleasant to himself, though really they were very dreadful thoughts. You see he was thinking how easy it was going to be to catch Paddy the Beaver, and what a splendid meal he would make. He licked his chops at the thought.

"He doesn't know I know he's here," thought Old Man Coyote. "In fact, I don't believe he even knows that I am anywhere around. Of course he won't be watching for me. He cuts his trees at night, so all I will have to do is to hide right close to where he is at work and he'll walk right into my mouth. Sammy Jay knows I was up there this morning, but Sammy sleeps at night, so he will not give the alarm. My, my, how good that Beaver will taste!" He licked his chops once more, then yawned and closed his eyes for a nap.

Old Man Coyote waited until jolly, round, red Mr. Sun had gone to bed behind the Purple Hills, and the black shadows had crept out across the Green Meadows. Then, keeping in the blackest of them, and very much like a shadow himself, he slipped into the Green Forest. It was dark in there and he made straight for Paddy's new pond, trotting along swiftly without making a sound. When he was near the aspen trees which he knew Paddy was planting to cut he crept forward very slowly and carefully. Everything was still as still could be.

"Good!" thought Old Man Coyote, "I am here first, and now all I need do is to hide and wait for Paddy to come ashore."

So he stretched himself flat behind some brush close, beside the little path Paddy had made up from the edge of the water, and waited. It was very still, so still that it seemed almost as if he could hear his heart beat. He could see the little stars twinkling in the sky and their own reflections twinkling back at them from the water of Paddy's pond. Old Man Coyote waited and waited. He is very patient when there is something to gain by it. With such a splendid dinner as Paddy the Beaver would make, he felt that he could well afford to be patient. So he waited and waited and everything was as still as if no living thing but the trees were there. Even the trees seemed to be asleep.

At last, after a long, long time, he heard just the faintest splash. He pricked up his ears and peeped out on the pond with the hungriest look in his cruel yellow eyes. There was a little line of silver coming straight toward him. He knew that it was made by Paddy the Beaver swimming. Nearer and nearer it drew. Old Man Coyote chuckled way down deep inside without making a sound. He could see Paddy's head now, now, and Paddy was coming straight in as if he hadn't a fear in the world.

Almost to the edge of the pond swam Paddy. Then he stopped. In a few minutes he began to swim again, but this time it was back in the direction of his house, and he seemed to be carrying something. It was one of the little food logs he had cut that day

and he was taking it out to his storehouse. Then back he came for another. And so he kept on, never once coming ashore. Old Man Coyote waited until Paddy had carried the last log to his storehouse and then with a loud whack on the water with his broad tail had dived and disappeared in his house.

Then Old Man Coyote arose and started elsewhere to look for his dinner, and in his heart was bitter disappointment.

(The Adventures of Paddy the Beaver, Chapter 17)

STORY 558. November 26, 1913

Old Man Coyote Tries Another Plan

For three nights Old Man Coyote had stolen up through the Green Forest with the coming of the black shadows and had hidden among the aspen trees where Paddy the Beaver had cut his food, and for three nights Paddy had failed to come ashore. Each night he had seemed to have enough food logs in the water to keep him busy without cutting more. Old Man Coyote lay there and the hungry look in his eyes changed to one of doubt and then to suspicion. Could it be that Paddy the Beaver was smarter than he thought? It began to look very much as if Paddy knew perfectly well that he was hiding there each night. Yes, sir, that's the way it looked. For three nights Paddy hadn't cut a single tree, and yet each night he had plenty of food logs ready to take to his storehouse out there in the pond.

"That means that he comes ashore in the daytime and cuts his trees," thought Old Man Coyote as, tired and with black anger in his heart he trotted home the third night. "He couldn't have found out about me himself; he isn't smart enough. It must be that someone has told him. And nobody knows that I have been over there but Sammy Jay. It must be he who has been the tattletale. I think I'll visit Paddy by daylight tomorrow and then we'll see!"

Now the trouble with some smart people is that they are never able to believe that others may be as smart as they. Old Man Coyote didn't know that the first time he had visited Paddy's pond he had left behind him a foot print in a little patch of soft mud. If he had known it, he wouldn't have believed that Paddy would be smart enough to guess what that footprint meant. But that is exactly what Paddy did do, as you and I know. So Old Man Coyote laid all the blame at the door of Sammy Jay, and that very morning when Sammy came flying over the Green Meadows Old Man Coyote accused him of being a tattletale and threatening the most dreadful things to Sammy if ever he caught him.

Now Sammy had flown down to the Green Meadows to tell Old Man Coyote how Paddy was doing all his work on land in the daytime. You see Paddy had twice given Sammy a terrible fright, once by cutting the very tree Sammy was sitting in, and once by cutting another tree so that it almost fell on Sammy. So he had made up his mind to get even by telling Old Man Coyote about Paddy's work by day. But when Old Man Coyote began to call him a tattletale and accuse him of having warned Paddy and to

threaten dreadful things, he straightway forgot all his anger at Paddy and turned it all on Old Man Coyote. He called him everything he could think of and this was a great deal for Sammy has a wicked tongue. When he hadn't any breath left, he flew over to the Green Forest and there he hid where he could watch all that was going on.

That afternoon Old Man Coyote tried his new plan. He slipped into the Green Forest, looking this way and that way to be sure that no one saw him. Then, very, very softly he crept up through the Green Forest toward the pond of Paddy the Beaver. As he drew near, he heard a crash and it made him smile. He knew what it meant. It meant that Paddy was at work cutting down trees. With his stomach almost on the ground he crept forward little by little, little by little, taking the greatest care not to rustle so much as a leaf. Presently he reached a place where he could see the aspen trees, and there sure enough was Paddy sitting up on his hind legs and hard at work cutting another tree.

Old Man Coyote lay down for a few minutes to watch. Then he wriggled a little nearer. Slowly and carefully, he drew his legs under him and made ready for a rush. Paddy the Beaver was his at last. At just that very minute a harsh scream rang out right over his head—"Thief! thief: thief"

It was Sammy Jay who had silently followed him all the way. Paddy the Beaver didn't stop to even look around, He knew what that scream meant and he scrambled down his little path to the water as he never had scrambled before. And as he dived with a great splash Old Man Coyote landed with a great jump on the very edge of the pond.

(The Adventures of Paddy the Beaver, Chapter 18)

STORY 559. November 27, 1913

Paddy the Beaver and Sammy Jay Become Friends

Paddy the Beaver floated in his pond and grinned in the most provoking way at Old Man Coyote, who had so nearly caught him. Old Man Coyote fairly danced with anger on the bank. He had felt so sure of Paddy that time that it was hard work to believe that Paddy had really gotten away from him. He bared his long cruel teeth and he looked very fierce and ugly.

"Come on in; the water's fine!" called Paddy.

Now, of course this wasn't a nice thing for Paddy to do, for it only made Old Man Coyote all the angrier. You see, Paddy knew perfectly well that Old Man Coyote has no love for the water, while Paddy lives in it most of the time. So, knowing that he was perfectly safe, he just couldn't resist the temptation to say some unkind things. You know he had had to be on the watch for days lest he should be caught, and so he hadn't been able to work quite so well as he could have with nothing to fear, and he still had a lot of work to do to prepare for winter. So he told Old Man Coyote just what he thought of him, and that he wasn't as smart as he thought he was or he never would have left a footprint in the mud to give him away.

When Sammy Jay, who was listening, and chuckling as he listened, heard that, he flew down where he would be just out of reach of Old Man Coyote, and then he just turned that tongue of his loose, and you know that some people say that Sammy's tongue is hung in the middle and wags at both ends. Of course, this isn't really so, but when he gets to abusing people, it seems as if it must be so. He called Old Man Coyote every bad name he could think of, and if there are any bad names Sammy doesn't know of no one else knows them. He called him a sneak, a thief, a coward, a bully, and a lot of other things.

"You said I had warned Paddy that you were trying to catch him and that that was why you failed to find him at work at night, and all the time you had warned him yourself!" screamed Sammy. "I used to think that you were smart, but I know better now. Paddy is twice as smart as you are.

Mr. Coyote is ever so sly
Mr. Coyote is clever and spry
If you believe all you hear
Mr. Coyote in naught of the kind;
Mr. Coyote is stupid and blind;
He can't catch a flea on his ear.

Paddy the Beaver laughed till the tears came at Sammy's foolish verse, but it made Old Man Coyote angrier than ever. He was angry with Paddy for escaping him and he was angry with Sammy, terribly angry, and the worst of it was he couldn't catch either one, for one was at home in the water and the other was at home in the air, and he couldn't follow either. Finally he saw it was of no use to stay there to be laughed at, so, muttering and grumbling, he started for the Green Meadows.

As soon as he was out of sight Paddy turned to Sammy Jay.

"Mr. Jay," said he, knowing how it tickled Sammy to be called "mister," "Mr. Jay, you have done me a mighty good turn today and I am not going to forget it. You can call me what you please and scream at me all you please, but you won't get any satisfaction out of it because I simply won't get angry. I will say to myself, "Mr. Jay saved my life the other day, and then I won't mind your tongue."

Now this made Sammy feel very proud and very happy. You know it is very seldom that he hears anything nice said of him. He flew down on the stump of one of the trees Paddy had cut. "Let's be friends," said he.

"With all my heart!" replied Paddy.

(*The Adventures of Paddy the Beaver*, Chapter 19, "Paddy and Sammy Become Friends")

STORY 560. November 28, 1913

Paddy the Beaver and Sammy Jay Talk Things Over

Paddy the Beaver sat looking thoughtfully at the aspen trees he would have to cut

to complete his store of food for the Winter. All those near the edge of his pond had been cut. The others were scattered about some little distance away. "I don't know," said Paddy out loud, "I don't know."

"What don't you know?" asked Sammy Jay, who, now that he and Paddy had become friends, was very much interested in what Paddy was doing.

"Why," replied Paddy, "I don't know just how I am going to get those trees. You see now that Old Man Coyote is watching for me, it isn't safe for me to go very far from my pond. I suppose I could dig a canal up to some of the nearest trees and then float them down to the pond, but it is hard to work and keep sharp watch for enemies at the same time. I guess I'll have to be content with some of these alders growing close to the water, but the bark of aspens is so much better that I—I wish I could get them."

"What's a canal?" asked Sammy abruptly.

"A canal? Why, a canal is a kind of ditch in which water can run," replied Paddy.

Sammy nodded. "I've seen Farmer Brown dig one over on the Green Meadows, but it looked like a great deal of work. I didn't suppose that any one else could do it. Do you really mean that you can dig a canal, Paddy?"

"Of course, I meant it," replied Paddy in a surprised tone of voice. "I have helped dig lots of canals. You ought to see some of them back where I came from."

"I'd like to," replied Sammy. "I think it is perfectly wonderful. I don't see how you do it."

"It's easy enough when you know how," replied Paddy. "If I dared to, I'd show you."

Sammy had a sudden idea. It almost made him gasp. "I tell you what, you work and I'll keep watch!" he cried. "You know my eyes are very sharp."

"Will you?" cried Paddy eagerly. "That would be perfectly splendid. You have the sharpest eyes of any one of whom I know and I would feel perfectly safe with you on watch. But I don't want to put you to all that trouble, Mr. Jay."

"Of course, I will," replied Sammy, "and it won't be any trouble at all. I'll just love to do it." You see, it made Sammy feel very proud to have Paddy say that he had such sharp eyes. "When will you begin?"

"Right away, if you will just take a look around and see that it is perfectly safe for one to come out on land."

Sammy didn't wait to hear more. He spread his beautiful blue wings and started off over the Green Forest straight for the Green Meadows. Paddy watched him go with a puzzled and disappointed air. "That's funny," thought he. "I thought he really meant it, and now off he goes without even saying goodbye."

In a little while back came Sammy all out of breath. "It's all right," he panted. "You can go to work just as soon as you please."

Illustrations. November 24 to November 29, 1913.



556. Old Man Coyote is Very Crafty
"So there is a newcomer in the Green Forest."



557. Old Man Coyote is Disappointed!
Old Man Coyote waited and waited.



558. Old Man Coyote Tries Another Plan
"He couldn't have found out about me himself."



559. Paddy the Beaver and Sammy Jay Become Friends
"Let's be friends," said he.



560. Paddy the Beaver and Sammy Jay Talk Things Over
Paddy watched him go with a puzzled and disappointed air.



561. Paddy Digs a Canal
"O," replied Paddy. "Sammy Jay and I are building a canal."

Paddy looked more puzzled than ever. “How do you know?” he asked, “I haven’t seen you looking around.”

“I did better than that,” replied Sammy. “If Old Man Coyote had been hiding somewhere in the Green Forest it might have taken me some time to find him. But he isn’t. You see, I flew straight over to his home in the Green Meadows to see if he is there, and he is. He’s taking a sun bath and looking as cross as two sticks. I don’t think he’ll be back here this morning, but I’ll keep a sharp watch while you work.”

Paddy made Sammy a low bow. “You certainly are smart, Mr Jay,” said he. “I wouldn’t have thought of going over to Old Man Coyote’s home to see if he was there. I’ll feel perfectly safe with you on guard. Now I’ll get to work.”

(The Adventures of Paddy the Beaver, Chapter 20, “Sammy Jay Offers to Help Paddy”)

STORY 561. November 29, 1913

Paddy Digs a Canal

Jerry Muskrat had been home to the Smiling Pool for several days. But he couldn’t stay there long. Oh, my, no! He just had to get back to see what his big cousin, Paddy the Beaver, was doing. So as soon as he was sure that everything was all right at the Smiling Pool, he hurried back up the Laughing Brook to Paddy’s pond, deep in the Green Forest. As soon as he was in sight of it, he looked eagerly for Paddy. At first, he didn’t see him. Then he stopped and gazed over at the place where Paddy had been cutting aspen trees for food. Something was going on there—something queer. He couldn’t make it out.

Just then Sammy Jay came flying over.

“What’s Paddy doing?” asked Jerry.

Sammy Jay dropped down to the top of an alder tree and fluffed out all his feathers in a very important way. “Oh,” said he, “Paddy and I are building something!”

“You! Paddy and you! Ha, ha! Paddy and you building something!” Jerry laughed.

“Yes, me,” snapped Sammy angrily. “That’s what I said—Paddy and I are building something.”

Jerry had begun to swim across the pond by this time and Sammy was flying across. “Why don’t you tell the truth, Sammy, and say that Paddy is building something and you are making him all the trouble you can?” called Jerry.

Sammy’s eyes snapped angrily and he darted down at Jerry’s little brown head. “It isn’t true!” he shrieked. “You ask Paddy if I’m not helping!”

Jerry ducked under water to escape Sammy’s sharp bill. When he came up again Sammy was over in the little grove of aspen trees, where Paddy was at work. Then Jerry discovered something. What was it? Why a little water path led right up to the aspen trees and there at the end of the little water path was Paddy the Beaver hard

at work. He was digging and piling the earth on one side very neatly. In fact, he was making the water path longer. Jerry swam right up the little water path to where Paddy was working. “Good morning, Cousin Paddy,” said he. “What are you doing?”

“Oh,” replied Paddy. “Sammy Jay and I are building a canal.”

Sammy Jay looked down at Jerry in triumph, and Jerry looked at Paddy as if he thought he was joking.

“Sammy Jay? What’s Sammy Jay got to do about it?” demanded Jerry.

“A whole lot,” replied Paddy. “You see, he keeps watch while I work. If he didn’t, I couldn’t work and there wouldn’t be any canal. Old Man Coyote has been trying to catch me and I wouldn’t dare work on shore if it wasn’t that I am sure that the sharpest eyes in the Green Forest are watching for danger.”

Sammy Jay looked very much pleased, indeed, and very proud. “So you see it takes both of us to make this canal; I dig while Sammy watches. So we are building it together,” continued Paddy. “I see,” said Jerry slowly. Then he turned to Sammy Jay. “I beg your pardon, Sammy,” said he. “I do, indeed.”

“That’s all right,” replied Sammy airily. “What do you think of our canal?”

“I think it is wonderful,” replied Jerry.

And indeed it was a very fine canal, straight, wide and deep enough for Paddy to swim and float his logs out to the pond. Yes, indeed, it was a very fine canal.

(*The Adventures of Paddy the Beaver*, Chapter 21, “Paddy and Sammy Jay Work Together”)

STORY 562. December 1, 1913

Paddy Finishes his Harvest

Sharp his tongue and sharp his eyes;
Sammy guards against surprise.
If ‘twere not for Sammy Jay
I could do no work today.

When Sammy overheard Paddy the Beaver say that to Jerry Muskrat, it made him swell up all over with pure pride. You see Sammy is so used to hearing bad things about himself that to hear something nice like that tickled him almost to death. He straightway forgot all the mean things he had said to Paddy when he first saw him—how he had called him a thief because he had cut the aspen trees he needed. He forgot all this. He forgot how Paddy had made him the laughing stock of the Green Forest and the Green Meadows by cutting down the very tree in which he was sitting. He forgot everything but that Paddy had trusted him to keep watch and now was saying nice things about him. He made up his mind that he would deserve all the nice things that Paddy could say, and he thought that Paddy was the finest fellow in the world.

Jerry Muskrat looked doubtful. He didn’t trust Sammy and he took care not to go

far from the water when he heard that Old Man Coyote had been hanging around. But Paddy worked away just as if he hadn't a fear in the world.

"The way to make people want to be trusted is to trust them," said he to himself. "If I show Sammy Jay that I don't really trust him he will think it is of no use to try, and will give it up. But if I do trust him, and he knows that I do, he'll be the best watchman in the Green Forest."

And this shows that Paddy the Beaver has a great deal of wisdom, for it was just as he thought. Sammy was on hand bright and early every morning. He made sure that Old Man Coyote was nowhere in the Green Forest and then he made himself comfortable in the top of a tall pine tree, where he could see all that was going on while Paddy the Beaver worked.

Paddy had finished his canal, and a beautiful canal it was, leading straight from his pond up to the aspen trees. As soon as he had finished it he began to cut the trees. As soon as one was down, he would cut it into short lengths and roll them into the canal. Then he would float them out to his pond and over to his storehouse. He took the larger branches on which there was sweet, tender bark in the same way, for Paddy is never wasteful.

After a while he went over to his storehouse, which, you know, was nothing but a pile of aspen logs and branches, in his pond close by his house. He studied it very carefully, then he swam back and climbed up on the bank of his canal.

"Mr Jay," said he, "I think our work is about finished."

"What!" cried Sammy, "aren't you going to cut the rest of these aspen trees?"

"No," replied Paddy. "Enough is always enough, and I've got enough to last me all Winter. I want those trees for next year."

Sammy looked disappointed. You see he had just begun to learn that the greatest pleasure in the world comes from doing things for other people. For the first time since he could remember some one wanted him around, and it gave him such a good feeling down deep inside. He was just going to say something, when his sharp eyes caught sight of something moving very slowly and carefully toward Paddy's pond. With a shrill scream he flew over to see what it was. Paddy didn't wait. He plunged into his canal and then swam under the water all the way to his house.

(The Adventures of Paddy the Beaver, Chapter 22)

STORY 563. December 2, 1913

Sammy Jay and Farmer Brown's Boy

Ever since he had found the strange pond, and the dam which had made it, deep in the Green Forest, Farmer Brown's boy studied and studied, and thought and thought about it and who could have made it. It puzzled him. It seemed as if some other boy or man must have done it. It certainly did seem so. He didn't know of any little forest or

meadow people who could have done it, and yet—well, the stumps of those trees which had been cut looked as if teeth, very big and wonderful teeth, but teeth and not tools, had done the work. Farmer Brown's boy didn't say a word to any one about what he had found. It was his very own secret—his and Bowser the Hound's. So he waited and watched for a chance to get up there again, but he couldn't get away until the very day that Paddy the Beaver finished harvesting his food supply.

Now Farmer Brown's boy had learned a great deal about the little people of the Green Forest and the Green Meadows. He had learned how very sharp their eyes are and how very keen their noses are, and how very wide open their ears are. He knew that if he wanted to see what was going on about that new pond he would have to be very, very still and careful in getting to it, and when he got there he would have to keep well hidden. So he left Bowser the Hound at home, and Bowser actually cried when he was left behind. Yes, sir, Bowser actually cried. Then Farmer Brown's boy stole up through the Green Forest until he was near the pond of Paddy the Beaver. The truth is he had begun to suspect who had built that dam and made that pond. He had never seen a beaver, but he had read about them, and he just couldn't think of any one else who could have done such a big and wonderful piece of work.

He was very much excited, was Farmer Brown's boy. He wanted to see for himself just what was going on. And so when he drew near to the new pond he got down on his hands and knees and crawled slowly, oh, so slowly, taking the greatest care not to rustle a leaf or snap a twig or make the least little sound. Now it is quite likely that Farmer Brown's boy would have succeeded in surprising Paddy the Beaver at work had it not been for Sammy Jay. You know Sammy was in the top of a tall pine tree keeping watch, and Sammy's eyes are so sharp that very little escapes them.

He saw something creeping through the Green Forest, and without waiting to see what it was he gave the alarm and Paddy dived into his pond. At first Sammy had thought it was Old Man Coyote creeping up, but as soon as he flew over nearer he knew who it was, and my, my, my, how he did scream and scold!

Farmer Brown's boy looked up and scowled angrily. Then he shook his fist at Sammy Jay. "You mischief maker!" he growled, "I'll bring my gun and shoot you one of these days! Yes, sir, that's just what I'll do!"

But Sammy didn't mind this at all. He knew that Farmer Brown's boy had no gun with him this time, and so he flew right down just over his head and screamed at him and called him names to his heart's content. Farmer Brown's boy jumped to his feet, for he knew that it was no longer of the least bit of use to try to steal up to the pond. He threw a pine cone at Sammy, and, of course, this made Sammy angrier than ever. He told everybody within hearing just what he thought of Farmer Brown's boy, and there wasn't a thing that Farmer Brown's could do about it. So he shrugged his shoulders and walked over to Paddy's dam. Then he gave a low whistle of surprise. There out in the pond was Paddy's new house! It hadn't been there when Farmer Brown's boy had found the pond. And there was Paddy's canal and the stumps of all the trees Paddy had cut. Farmer Brown's boy no longer wondered who had made the pond. He knew.

"I think I'll have a beaver skin one of these fine days!"

“You’ll have to be smarter than you’ve ever been yet!” screamed Sammy Jay.

But Farmer Brown’s boy took no notice. You see he didn’t understand what Sammy said.

STORY 564. December 3, 1913

Farmer Brown’s Boy Does a Mean Thing

Farmer Brown’s boy stood on the dam of Paddy the Beaver with his eyes wide with wonder. It didn’t seem possible that that splendid dam and fine house could really have been built by one of the little forest people, and yet he was sure, quite sure, that they had been. A great desire to see this busy little worker of the Green Forest filled his heart.

“Perhaps,” thought Farmer Brown’s boy, “If I hide and keep perfectly still, Mr Beaver will show himself and I can see what he looks like.”

So he crawled under a pile of brush where he could peep out and see the pond and the house of Paddy the Beaver, but where he was certain that Paddy could not see him. But he had forgotten one thing. Yes, sir, he had forgotten one thing, and that was a most important thing. He had forgotten that Sammy Jay was still watching him. Sammy kept his tongue still until Farmer Brown’s boy was nicely hidden and was chuckling to himself at the thought of how smart he was. Then Sammy flew over to a part of the Green Forest where he felt sure of finding his cousin, Blacky the Crow. Sure enough, Blacky was there.

“Come with me; I’ve something to show you,” said Sammy.

“What is it?” asked Blacky, beginning to look interested.

“It’s the biggest nuisance in the Green Forest, but I think we can have some fun with it,” replied Sammy.

“That sounds like mischief, Sammy Jay,” replied Blacky severely, but there was a twinkle in his eyes, for you know Blacky is just as fond of mischief as Sammy is.

“Come and see,” was all Sammy said, but he winked when he said it and started back for the pond of Paddy the Beaver. Of course, Blacky followed.

Nothing could have kept him away after that.

When they reached the pond Sammy led the way to a tall pine tree. “Now you wait here until I come back,” said he. “I won’t be gone long, and when I come back, we’ll have some fun.”

With that he flew away to that part of the Green Forest where Chatterer the Red Squirrel lives. Sammy and Chatterer are forever quarreling, and Chatterer began to call Sammy names as soon as he saw him. Sammy paid no attention whatever to the bad names. “Want to have some fun?” he demanded.

Chatterer stopped scolding and looked at Sammy suspiciously. “What kind of

fun?” he demanded.

“If you do, just come over to the pond of Paddy the Beaver as quickly as you can. You will find Blacky the Crow with me in the tall pine tree there,” Sammy continued. “We’ll wait long enough for you to get there.”

Without another word Sammy started back for the pine tree where he had left Blacky the Crow. Chatterer watched him go. Then he made up his mind quickly. “When Sammy Jay and Blacky the Crow get together there is bound to be something going on,” said he. “I think I’ll go,” and with that he started for the pond of Paddy the Beaver as fast as he could go.

Sammy saw him coming and chuckled. “Now we’ll have some fun,” said he as Chatterer came up all out of breath. “Look down underneath that old pile of brush.”

Blacky and Chatterer looked as they were bidden, and right away their sharp eyes saw Farmer Brown’s boy hiding there. They knew right away that he was trying to keep out of sight of some one, and that nothing would provoke him more than to have his hiding place given away. And, of course, that is just what they did. Sammy knew that he had no gun with him, and so they had nothing to fear. Sammy and Blacky flew down right over the pile of brush. Chatterer danced around in the most provoking way right in front of Farmer Brown’s boy.

Then at the top of their lungs they began to call him names.

“Here he is! Here he is, right under this pile of brush!” they shrieked. “Here’s Farmer Brown’s boy! Here’s the greatest nuisance in the Green Forest!”

Of course, Farmer Brown’s boy knew then that it was of no use to hide any longer. He knew that Paddy the Beaver never would show himself with such a racket going on. He scrambled to his feet angrily. And then a thought came to him. He would tear a hole in Paddy’s dam and let the water out of the pond.

STORY 565. December 4, 1913

Paddy the Beaver Too Smart for Farmer Brown’s Boy

Farmer Brown’s boy was much pleased with himself. He would tear a hole in the dam of Paddy the Beaver so that the water from the pond would run out and then Paddy would have to show himself. Why hadn’t he thought of such a simple plan before? It couldn’t fail. He hurried over to the dam and right in the middle began to pull out sticks and make a hole. It wasn’t as easy as he had thought it would be. You see, Paddy had built his dam well. But Farmer Brown’s boy kept at it. He tugged and pulled and pulled and tugged until finally he had made a hole through which the water rushed.

Farmer Brown’s boy sat down to rest. “There,” said he. “I guess that will make Mr. Beaver a little uneasy.”

He was quite right. It did make Paddy the Beaver uneasy. At first, of course, he didn’t know anything about it, because he was safe in the big, comfortable room in his

house out in the pond. He could hear Sammy Jay and Blacky the Crow making a great fuss, so he knew that it wasn't safe to come out. He busied himself by cutting off the ends of sticks that stuck out from the walls. You see Paddy wouldn't be happy if he wasn't busy about something. By and by he happened—just happened—to look down one of his halls leading to a doorway down under the water. Paddy gave a great jump inside. Something was wrong! The water didn't come up as it should. He rushed to another hall and then to a third. It was just the same in each.

Right away Paddy knew what was the matter. There was a break in his dam and the water was getting lower and lower and lower in his pond. If that break wasn't mended all the water in his pond would run down the Laughing Brook and there wouldn't be any pond. Then his splendid house would be of no use and Old Man Coyote would be able to catch him. Something had got to be done! Yes, sir, something had got to be done right away!

Paddy sat for a few minutes staring down at the water. It got lower while he looked. He listened. Sammy Jay and Blacky the Crow were still making a great fuss, so he knew that Farmer Brown's boy was still there. Then he slipped down one of the halls and swam under water to his storehouse. Now some of the branches of his food supply came quite to the surface of the water, and even a little bit above. Paddy swam up under one of these where he could put his head above water without being seen. He looked all around and pretty soon he saw what he was looking for—Farmer Brown's boy sitting down to rest under a tall pine tree. Sammy Jay and Blacky the Crow were telling him what they thought of him for doing such a mean thing as to make a hole in Paddy's dam.

Paddy's eyes twinkled. Then he took a long breath and swam under water straight over to the hole in his dam. Working as fast as he knew how he scooped up mud and stuffed it into the hole. He brought two or three sticks from another part of the dam and put them in there. When he could hold his breath no longer, he stuck just the end of his nose out of water and took another long breath. Little by little the water stopped rushing through the hole. By and by it stopped altogether. Paddy had mended his dam.

All this time Farmer Brown's boy sat under the pine tree resting, for tearing that hole in the dam had been hard work. By and by he noticed that the pond didn't seem to be getting lower as fast as it ought to. He watched for some time. Then he noticed that he couldn't hear the rushing sound of the water as loud as at first. After awhile he didn't hear it at all. "That's queer," he said, and started over to the dam. "Must be that something has drifted into that hole and filled it up," he muttered. When he reached the dam and looked, he knew that the mud and sticks with which the hole was filled could never have drifted there; someone had put them there. Of course that someone must have been Paddy the Beaver.

Farmer Brown's boy straightened up and looked over to Paddy's house. Then he took off his hat and made a low bow.

"I can't see you, Mr. Beaver," said he, "but I guess you see me, and I take off my hat to you. You are too smart for me and I want you to know that this is the last time I'll ever meddle with your dam, and no one else will if I can help it."

Farmer Brown's Boy Lives Up to His Word

Sammy Jay followed Farmer Brown's boy all the way through the Green Forest scolding and saying impudent things to him. But he was wasting his breath. Farmer Brown's boy didn't pay any attention to him. He just did not notice him at all. Of course, this made Sammy angrier than ever, but try as he would he couldn't make Farmer Brown's boy even look at him.

You see, Farmer Brown's boy was thinking very hard. He was thinking about that splendid pond and that splendid dam and that splendid house and that splendid canal back there deep in the Green Forest, and how wonderful it was that they had been made by Paddy the Beaver. The more he thought about it the more his respect for Paddy grew. It was the first time that he ever had had real respect for any of the little meadow and forest people, and it gave him a queer feeling.

"Why," said he, talking aloud as he walked along. "If I should meet that Beaver, I should feel just like taking my hat off and bowing to him. I really would. I was planning to trap him and get his skin, but now after seeing what he has done, and after having him actually mend his dam without me knowing it, I just couldn't trap him! No, sir, I just couldn't. He's afraid of me, but he doesn't need to be any longer. I'm the best friend he's got if he only knew it. That was a mean thing I did this afternoon when I tore a hole in his dam to let the water out of his pond. I'm ashamed of myself, and yet—well, I'm kind of glad I did it, too. You see, I wouldn't have known how smart he is if I hadn't. I guess he was some worried when he found the water growing lower and lower in his pond. And I'm afraid he's worrying some now for fear I'll do it again. I—I ought to make it up to him somehow. I'll just have to think how I can."

Farmer Brown's boy was quite right about Paddy. He was worrying. It was bad enough to know that Old Man Coyote was prowling around and that he would have to always be on the watch to keep from being caught and eaten up. But Paddy had a great deal of faith in his eyes and ears and nose to warn him of danger. That was what they had been given him for by Old Mother Nature. "If I'm not as smart as Old Man Coyote then I deserve to be caught," thought he. But to have Farmer Brown's boy making trouble for him was another matter. Yes, indeed, that was quite another matter! It certainly did worry him. He had made his pond very deep in the Green Forest because he had thought that no one but the little people who live there, and of whom he had no fear, would find it. It was too late for him to go somewhere else and build a new dam and make a new pond because Jack Frost would be along most any day now. There was nothing to do but spend the Winter right there and watch out sharper than ever. He sighed long and deep.

Why men and boys so cruel are
I cannot understand.
If they would only be our friends
What joy would fill the land!

Illustrations. December 1 to December 6, 1913.



562. Paddy Finishes his Harvest
"Mr. Jay," said he, "I think our work is about finished."



563. Sammy Jay and Farmer Brown's Boy
"You mischief maker!" he growled.



564. Farmer Brown's Boy Does a Mean Thing
"Come with me; I have something to show you," said Sammy.



565. Paddy the Beaver Too Smart for Farmer Brown's Boy
Then he took off his hat and made a bow.



566. Farmer Brown's Boy Lives Up to his Word
"If I'm not so smart as Old Man Coyote, I deserve to be caught," said he.



567. Farmer Brown's Boy Visits the Great Forest Again
He found Paddy staring at one of the boards.

Paddy sighed again as he said this, and then swam over to his dam to see that the place he had mended was all right.

And all the time Farmer Brown's boy was keeping right on thinking and thinking, and if Paddy could only have known what he was thinking he wouldn't have worried half so much. You see, Farmer Brown's boy was doing his very best to think of some plan to help Paddy and make him safe. He was trying to live up to his word when he said that he would never again meddle with Paddy's dam or allow any one else to.

STORY 567. December 6, 1913

Farmer Brown's Boy Visits the Great Forest Again

Some one was coming through the Green Forest. There was no doubt about it. Paddy the Beaver listened to the screams of Sammy Jay drawing nearer and Paddy guessed right away that Sammy was making all that racket to let him know that Farmer Brown's boy was coming. So with a sigh, Paddy slipped into the water and dived. But this time instead of swimming over to his house where he would be safe and comfortable, but where he could see nothing, he swam over to his feed pile, where he could hide under the branches which came above the surface and still could see all that went on.

Presently Sammy Jay flew to the top of the tall pine tree in which he was fond of sitting. His sharp eyes told him that Paddy was nowhere in sight, "I guess he heard my warning," thought Sammy with a great deal of satisfaction. Then he began once more to call bad names. Paddy couldn't see at first who it was that Sammy was calling such dreadful names, but in a few minutes Farmer Brown's boy stepped out from among the trees of the Green Forest and stood looking eagerly at Paddy's house and over Paddy's pond.

Paddy scowled. In his heart was a very bitter feeling. Was Farmer Brown's boy going to tear another hole in his dam as he had the day before? The bitter feeling in Paddy's heart grew to something very like hate as he watched every move of Farmer Brown's boy. He was beginning to wish with all his heart that he had not come down from the North Woods to the Green Forest. He had had a lot of worries up there, for all the time he had to be on the watch for dangerous neighbors—Flatfoot the Black Bear, Tufty the Lynx, Old Twitchtail the Panther and Howler the Wolf. But here was some one more to be dreaded than any or all of these. Anyway that is the way it seemed to Paddy as he watched from his hiding place.

Farmer Brown's boy seemed to be very happy as he worked, for he began work almost as soon as he arrived. He whistled and he sang as if his heart were very light. Somehow that made Paddy's heart heavier than ever. Farmer Brown's boy went over to the big pine tree where Sammy Jay had kept watch while Paddy was digging his canal. To the trunk of the pine tree he nailed a broad white board. Then he stood off and looked at it and smiled as if it pleased him very much. Then he went around to the other side of Paddy's pond and nailed another board to a tall dead stump.

“There,” said he as he drove the last nail, “I guess that is all I can do for you now, Mr Beaver.” And with that he started off home, whistling as he tramped along.

Sammy Jay followed him to the edge of the Green Forest. Then he hurried back to Paddy’s pond. He found Paddy staring at one of the boards Farmer Brown’s boy had nailed up. Paddy’s face wore a worried look. He didn’t know what to think. He suspected that it was some sort of a trap, but he didn’t know. It was different from any trap he had ever seen and he just didn’t know what to think. Sammy flew down where he could look at the board. He cocked his head on one side. There were a lot of little black marks all over the board. Sammy didn’t know just what they meant, but he had an idea. He had seen a board like that on the edge of the old orchard, and he had noticed that when men and boys came along that way and saw that board they never went into the old orchard.

“I believe that Farmer Brown’s boy isn’t so bad after all,” said he to Paddy. “I believe that’s a sign telling other people to keep away, and Old Man Coyote is the only one you need worry about after all.”

And Sammy Jay had guessed right the very first time. You see, Farmer Brown owned that part of the Green Forest, and the two boards Farmer Brown’s boy had put up were signs—signs telling other people that they must keep away. Paddy felt a load slip away from his heart. Of course he wasn’t sure, but he hoped that Sammy was right and told him so.

“I know I am,” replied Sammy, and flew over to sit on one of the signs.

STORY 568. December 8, 1913

Jack Frost Arrives

The Moon looked down on the Green Forest and the little pond of Paddy the Beaver in the very heart of it, and the Moon smiled, for it was plain to see that Paddy the Beaver was happy. Yes, sir, he was happy. There was no doubt about it. For the time being he had forgotten all about his worries regarding Farmer Brown’s boy. He couldn’t have told you just how, but somehow he knew that Jack Frost would arrive that very night, and Paddy was preparing for him. You see it was this way: To make that splendid house of his out in his pond as stout and safe and good as he wanted it to be Paddy needed the help of Jack Frost, and so he had been waiting and watching for him. So now that he was sure that Jack Frost would arrive that very night he was, working very hard to be ready for him.

What was Paddy doing? Why, he was putting more mud on the walls and roof of his house, digging it up from the bottom of his pond and plastering it on thick. He knew that it would remain soft and wet all night if Jack Frost didn’t arrive before morning. Then when he did arrive it would be all ready for him to freeze until it was almost as hard as stone. So he worked and worked as hard as ever he could and patted and smoothed the mud down on the walls and roof of his house and hoped that Jack Frost would come early enough to do his work so well that jolly, round, red Mr. Sun would

not be able to undo it with his warm rays the next morning.

The little stars looked down and twinkled as they watched Paddy work, and they were very, very bright. By and by way over in the Green Forest where the black shadows were blackest Paddy heard a stick snap. He sat up on the roof of his house to listen. Who was coming? It couldn't be Old Man Coyote, for whoever knew him to be so careless as to snap a twig? No, it couldn't be Old Man Coyote. It might be Farmer Brown's boy, but somehow Paddy felt sure that Farmer Brown's boy would never come way up there in the Green Forest in the night. No, it couldn't be Farmer Brown's boy. He listened with both little ears wide open. There it was again, the snap of a stick! Paddy smiled. There was no doubt now of who was coming. It was Jack Frost! No one else loved to snap sticks just for the fun of it as does Jack Frost. Nearer and nearer came the sound of snapping sticks and broader and broader grew the smile of Paddy the Beaver. But now he no longer sat idly listening. He was at work harder than ever plastering mud on the roof of his house.

And so Jack Frost found him and chuckled as he blew his cold, cold breath on the wet mud until it grew stiff and stiffer and then hard. And Paddy chuckled as he brought up the mud and saw it harden almost as soon as it was put in place, for they are very good friends are Paddy the Beaver and Jack Frost "I'm glad you've come!" cried Paddy.

"I'm glad that someone is glad that I've come," replied Jack Frost, "for some people seem to be afraid of me and those are the people I love to see shiver and shake. I love to hear their teeth chatter. Put a little more mud here so that I may freeze it."

So Paddy the Beaver and Jack Frost worked while the little stars looked on and twinkled, and in the morning when jolly, round, red Mr. Sun threw his nightcap off and started his daily climb up in the blue, blue sky he looked down on the little pond in the heart of the Green Forest, and, behold! it was smooth and shining, for it was covered with ice and out of the middle of it rose the walls and roof of the house of Paddy the Beaver, so stout and hard that even the sharp claws of Tufty the Lynx could not have torn it open. The house of Paddy had been finished by Jack Frost.

(Published as single-story book, *Jack Frost Helps Paddy the Beaver*, by J.N. Cole, 1914)

STORY 569. December 9, 1913

Chatterer the Red Squirrel Holds His Tongue

Chatterer the Red Squirrel sat in the top of a pine tree scolding. Who was he scolding? Why, no one in particular. In fact he was scolding because there was no one about to scold. He was scolding just to hear his own voice. You see, Chatterer is never really happy unless there is a fuss of some kind going on. He dearly loves a fuss, and when he cannot find anyone else to quarrel with, he tries to quarrel with himself. At least that is the way it seems to the other little people of the Green Forest.

Now that Jack Frost had arrived and so many of the little feathered people had

gone away for the Winter, and so many of the little people who wear fur had gone to sleep for the Winter, there was so much less mischief for him to get into, that Chatterer was feeling rather dull. You know he loves excitement. Yes, sir, Chatterer the Red Squirrel loves excitement, and this bright morning there wasn't any. So he sat in the pine tree and scolded just to keep his spirits up.

It was very still there in the Green Forest, very still, indeed, except for his own voice. He hadn't seen a soul to torment that whole blessed morning, and he hadn't a blessed thing to do. He had harvested all the nuts and corn and pine seeds that he needed for the Winter and now he just didn't know what to do with himself. Suddenly a thought popped into his head. Chatterer stopped scolding and grinned.

"I believe I'll run over to the hollow chestnut and wake up Bobby Coon," said he. "Bobby is sure to be asleep, and to wake him now is sure to make him cross. That will be fun.

He scampered through the tree tops and over to the big hollow chestnut tree which is the home of Bobby Coon, and listened at Bobby's door. Yes, Bobby was there and he was asleep. Chatterer stuck his head inside.

Wake up! Wake up, you sleepy-head!
This is no time to be in bed!

he shouted in his shrillest voice. Bobby stirred uneasily, for he was not yet in that sound asleep with which he passes the coldest part of the Winter.

"Go 'way," he murmured.

"Sleepy-head! Sleepy-head!" taunted Chatterer, dancing around the doorway. Then he whisked down to the ground and in a minute was back up in the tree with a big pine cone which he dropped in on Bobby Coon. It just happened to hit Bobby on the end of his nose, for he had uncurled enough to look up to see what all the fuss was about. Right away he lost his temper, which was just what Chatterer hoped for. He growled and he snarled and he told Chatterer that he would eat him alive. He even climbed up and stuck his head out of his door, all the time grinding his teeth in the fiercest and most unpleasant way. Chatterer fairly shrieked with glee, and threw bits of bark at Bobby. All the time his tongue was going as fast as it could. He called Bobby bad names. He dared him to come out and try to catch him. He made such a racket that it could be heard for a long way through the Green Forest.

Suddenly, while he was pausing to get his breath, Chatterer heard a rustle of leaves—just the faintest kind of a rustle on the ground. He peered down, and in a minute his sharp eyes saw something that made his heart jump with fright. He forgot all about Bobby Coon. He didn't have the least desire to scold. In fact, he held his tongue and his breath, and his eyes fairly popped out of his head. What he saw was Shadow the Weasel coming straight to the big hollow chestnut tree. Shadow's claws rattled on the bark of the tree. Chatterer waited to see no more. Without a sound he ran out on a branch of the tree he was in and leaped to the next tree. And then, as fast as a frightened squirrel could go, he raced away through the treetops, and he didn't have to look back to know that Shadow the Weasel was following.

Chatterer Runs for his Life

Chatterer the Red Squirrel had been scolding because there was no excitement. He had even tried to make some excitement by waking Bobby Coon and making him so angry that Bobby had threatened to eat him alive. It had been great fun to dance around and call Bobby names and make fun of him. O, yes, it had been great fun. You see he knew all the time that Bobby couldn't catch him if he should try. But now things were different. Chatterer had all the excitement that he wanted. Indeed, he had more than he wanted. The truth is Chatterer was running for his life and he knew it.

It is a terrible thing, a very terrible thing to have to run for one's life. Peter Rabbit knows all about it. He has run for his life often. Sometimes it has been Reddy Fox behind him, sometimes Bowser the Hound, and once or twice Old Man Coyote. Peter has known that on his long legs his life has depended and more than once a terrible fear has filled his heart. But Peter has also known that if he could reach the old stone wall or the dear old briar patch first he would be safe, and he always has reached it. So when he has been running with that terrible fear in his heart there has always been hope there, too.

But Chatterer the Red Squirrel was running without hope. Yes, sir, there was nothing but fear, terrible fear, in his heart, for he knew not where to go. The hollow tree or the holes in the old stonewall, where he would be safe from anyone else, even Farmer Brown's boy, offered him no safety now, for the one who was following him with hunger in his cruel red eyes could go anywhere that he could go—could go in any hole big enough for him to squeeze into. You see it was Shadow the Weasel from whom Chatterer was running, and Shadow is so slim that he can slip in and out of places that even Chatterer cannot get through.

Chatterer knew all this and so, because it was of no use to run to his usual safe hiding places, he ran in just the other direction. He didn't know where he was going. He had just one thought—to run and run as long as he could and then, well, he would try to fight, though he knew it would be of no use.

"O, dear! O, dear!" he sobbed as he ran out on the branch of a tree and leaped across to the next tree, "I wish I had minded my own business! I wish I had kept my tongue still. Shadow the Weasel wouldn't have known where I was if he hadn't heard my voice. O, dear! O, dear me! What can I do? What can I do?"

Now, in his great fright Chatterer had run and jumped so hard that he was beginning to grow very tired. Presently he found that he must make a very long jump to reach the next tree. He had often made as long a jump as that and thought nothing of it, but now he was so tired that the distance looked twice as great as it really was. He didn't dare stop to run down the tree and scamper across. So he took a long breath, ran swiftly along the branch and leaped. His hands just touched the tip of the nearest branch of the other tree. He tried his very best to hold on, but he couldn't. Then down, down, down he fell. He spread himself out as flat as he could and that saved him a

little, but still it was a dreadful fall, and when he landed it seemed for just a minute as if all the breath was gone from his body. But it wasn't quite, and in another minute he was scrambling up the tree.

(The Adventures of Chatterer the Red Squirrel, Chapter 1, "Chatterer the Red Squirrel Runs for his Life")

STORY 571. December 11, 1913

Shadow the Weasel Enjoys Himself

When I start to do a thing, I always see it through;
I find it really is the best and only way to do.

That's a little rule that Shadow the Weasel made for himself a long time ago and which he tries to live up to. Of course sometimes things happen to prevent, but usually he does whatever he sets out to do. It really is a very good rule if you add to it this:

I never try to do a thing I shouldn't if I could,
And always try to make that thing a thing that's really good.

But Shadow never has added that last part. In truth Shadow would just laugh at that if he should hear it. The fact is, Shadow the Weasel has a bad heart. Yes, sir, Shadow has a bad heart, a black, black heart! It is such a black heart that sometimes it seems as if there was no good in it. None of his neighbors believes there is. They all hate him, even his own cousins, Billy Mink and Jimmy Skunk. And Shadow doesn't seem to care. It seems sometimes as if he actually enjoyed being hated. Certainly, he enjoys seeing other little people afraid of him, as most of them are, particularly those somewhere near his size. Just whisper in the ear of Peter Rabbit, or Happy Jack Squirrel, or Danny Meadow Mouse, or Striped Chipmunk, or Mrs. Grouse that Shadow the Weasel is near and see how anxious they will grow.

This particular morning Shadow had been feeling very much out of sorts. Yes, sir, Shadow had been feeling very much out of sorts. You see he had hunted most of the night without finding anything to eat, and so he was hungry, very hungry, indeed. He had been out on the Green Meadow hunting for Danny Meadow Mouse when he heard Chatterer the Red Squirrel scolding over in the Green Forest. Shadow lifted his head to listen. Then a cruel, hungry look crept into his eyes and he showed his sharp little teeth in a cruel, hungry smile as he said:

"That sounds to me like last night's dinner and this morning's breakfast both in one. I think Chatterer will make a better meal than even Danny Meadow Mouse."

With that he licked his lips and started in the direction of Chatterer's voice, and he actually had started up the tree Chatterer was in before Chatterer saw him. It was then that Chatterer had started on his mad flight of fear through the treetops. Now while Chatterer raced and jumped through the tree tops as fast as ever he could, and so tired himself out, Shadow the Weasel took his time in following. He ran swiftly, but not swiftly enough to tire himself. He didn't try to keep Chatterer in sight. You see, he

trusted to his nose to tell him where Chatterer had gone, and his nose never deceived him. It told him just what branches Chatterer had run along and just where he had jumped to the next tree.

Now, Shadow is himself a nimble climber, and he had no trouble in going wherever Chatterer had gone until he reached the place where Chatterer had made the long jump and fallen. Shadow just glanced at it and turned around. He had no mind to risk any such fall as that. He knew that all he had to do was to run down the tree and up the next. When he reached the ground he started at a gallop across to the next tree, but from habit his nose was busy on the ground as he ran. Suddenly he stopped.

“Ha!” said he. “Seems to me I smell Chatterer down here! What does that mean?”

His nose led him straight to the tree and up. Shadow grinned. He knew perfectly what had happened.

“Chatterer missed that jump and had a bad fall. I guess it must have shaken him up a little and he won’t be able to run so fast,” thought he. Then he started on as lively as ever. He was enjoying himself. He didn’t mind that run through the tree tops, because he didn’t have to hurry any faster than he pleased and because he was sure of a good dinner at the end.

STORY 572. December 12, 1913

Chatterer Tries Some Tricks

Chatterer the Red Squirrel had no hope. He was growing tired and more tired and still more tired as he ran through the tree tops, while behind him came Shadow the Weasel. At last he grew so tired that he felt that he had just got to have a few minutes of rest. Perhaps he could fool Shadow. Anyway he would try. He ran down to the ground, wriggled his way through a big pile of brush, hurried over to another tree and started up. But instead of going nearly to the top as usual and then leaping across to another tree, he ran out on a little dead stub of a branch only half-way up the tree and jumped straight over to the trunk of another tree, where his sharp claws caught in the rough bark. And as he jumped there was a sharp snap behind him. Chatterer knew what it meant. The little dead stub from which he had jumped had broken off close to the trunk of the tree.

The first little ray of hope he had had stole into Chatterer’s heart. There would be nothing now to show Shadow the Weasel in which direction he had gone. Chatterer crept into an old nest of Sammy Jay’s, where he could watch and rest and get his breath. He didn’t have to wait long. A long slim form came bounding along the ground in long leaps. Chatterer trembled all over when he saw it. It was Shadow the Weasel. Straight to the tree from which Chatterer had jumped he went and up to the place where the little dead stub had broken off. There the trail ended. Shadow ran up a little way above and circled wholly round the tree trunk. His nose told him that no Squirrel had been there. Then he returned to the place where the little dead stub had been broken off and looked across to the tree in which Chatterer was hiding.

Illustrations. December 8 to December 13, 1913.



568. Jack Frost Arrives
He listened with both his little ears wide open.



569. Chatterer the Red Squirrel Holds his Tongue
He even climbed up and stuck his head out of his door.



570. Chatterer Runs For his Life
And Chatterer, the Red Squirrel, was running without hope.



571. Shadow the Weasel Enjoys Himself
This particular morning, Shadow had been very much out of sorts.



572. Chatterer Tries Some Tricks
The first little ray of hope he had.



573. Chatterer has a Dreadful Thought
“If he finds Happy Jack at home he will forget about me.”

Poor Chatterer! He knew by the look in those fierce red eyes that Shadow wasn't fooled. He knew just where he had gone and he didn't wait to see Shadow run down the tree and across to the one in which he was waiting. No, sir, he didn't wait. He had had a wee bit of rest and a chance to get his breath, and now he started on again headlong as before, with the same great fear clutching at his heart and the little ray of hope quite gone. But that little trick had given him a few minutes in which to rest, and so presently he tried to think of some other trick, though right down inside he felt that it would be of no real use.

This time he tried criss-crossing his own trail, running back and forth and round all over the branches of a spruce tree, and then once more ran on, this time along the ground, until he came to a hollow log. He ran in at one end, out at the other, back along the outside of the log and then did it all over again, finally making a long jump from the end of the log to one side. But he was so tired that the jump was not nearly as long as he had meant it to be.

And behind came Shadow the Weasel. He actually grinned when he reached the spruce tree and found the criss-crossed trail. It didn't bother him a bit. His wonderful nose led him through every twist and turn Chatterer had made, and he knew perfectly well that Chatterer was growing very, very tired. When he reached the hollow log, he half expected to find Chatterer there, but when he didn't, he wasted no time. He came out at the other end and then ran in a little circle around the old log with his nose to the ground, just as Bowser the Hound circles when Reddy Fox has tried to fool him by making a long jump to one side. In a few minutes he had found Chatterer's trail once more, and he knew by the smell that Chatterer was only a very little way ahead. He began to run a little faster.

"I may as well end this chase right away," said he to himself. "I have had all the exercise I need and my stomach is quite ready for that foolish squirrel. Ha! There he is in the very next tree!"

STORY 573. December 13, 1913

Chatterer has a Dreadful Thought

Chatterer the Red Squirrel was almost too frightened to think. He knew that the end must come soon unless something wonderful happened. The simple little tricks he had tried had not fooled Shadow the Weasel at all. He was right in the very next tree, and Chatterer didn't even dare stop to look behind. Then an idea popped into his head. It just seemed to come without any thinking on his part. It was a dreadful idea—a truly dreadful idea. At first Chatterer wouldn't let himself think of it at all. But, little by little, he did think of it, and the more he thought of it the less dreadful it seemed. That is a way bad thoughts have—the longer you let them stay the less bad they seem. And it was so with Chatterer now. What was the dreadful thought? Why, it was to lead Shadow the Weasel over to the home of Happy Jack the Gray Squirrel, who, you know, is own cousin to Chatterer.

"If he finds Happy Jack at home, he'll forget all about me," thought Chatterer, "for

Happy Jack is bigger and fatter than I am and will make a better dinner. Of course, I don't like to do it; it really is a very dreadful thing to do. No, sir, I don't like to do it; but—but it is everybody for himself these days, and I—I—can't run much longer. Of course, it won't be really my fault if Happy Jack gets killed, because all I'll do is to simply run past his door. Then, if Shadow chooses to go in there why—why—well, it won't be my fault."

Now, of course, Chatterer knew perfectly well that this wasn't true. But Chatterer is a coward, and he was thinking in just the way that cowards think. He knew that it was his own fault that he was in such dreadful danger himself—that if he had minded his own business instead of tormenting Bobby Coon by waking him from sleep, Shadow the Weasel would not have heard him and so been able to find him. But, like all cowards, Chatterer wasn't brave enough to face the results of his own fault, and now he was ready to see some one else suffer for what he had done. A little, still voice down inside told him that what he was thinking of was a dreadful and cowardly thing, but he tried not to listen to it.

"Happy Jack is bigger and stronger than I am, and I shouldn't wonder if he could fight Shadow and whip him. In fact, I am almost sure he can," thought Chatterer. Yet all the time he knew that Happy Jack couldn't, for just as likely as not he would be taking a nap and it would be all over before he knew he was in danger. You see, Chatterer was just trying to fool himself.

"I wish I had thought of it before" he panted. "It's a long way over to Happy Jack's house, and I may not be able to get there before Shadow catches me."

But the thought that he might, he just might, escape gave him new strength, and for a little while he actually gained on Shadow the Weasel. He didn't stay in the treetops now, but ran along the ground as fast as ever he could in the direction of Happy Jack's house. He was not halfway there when, looking over his shoulder, he saw Shadow bounding along with great leaps just a little way behind him, and he knew that in a few more leaps Shadow would have him. Shadow could go faster on the ground than he could. He gave one despairing glance in the treetops where he had raced and played and been happy so long, and which he felt sure now he would never play in again. Near the top of one of them was a big brown bunch. Chatterer's heart gave a little throb of hope. He saw what he thought might be a last chance.

STORY 574. December 15, 1913

Chatterer's Last Chance

Chatterer the Red Squirrel, running for his life and without the least hope, suddenly saw a last chance to escape from Shadow the Weasel. That is, he saw something that might offer him a chance. He couldn't be sure until he had tried, and even then, he might escape from one danger only to run right into another equally great. What Chatterer saw was a big brown bunch near the top of a tall chestnut tree, and he headed for that tree as fast as ever he could go. What was that big brown bunch? Why it was Redtail the Hawk, who was dozing there with his head drawn down

between his shoulders dreaming of the warm Southland.

Now, old Redtail is one of Chatterer's deadliest enemies. He is quite as fond of Red Squirrel as is Shadow the Weasel, though he doesn't often try to catch one, because there are other things to eat much easier to get. Chatterer had had more than one narrow escape from old Redtail, and was very much afraid of him, yet here he was running up the very tree in which Redtail was sitting. You see, a very daring idea had come into his head. He had seen at once that Redtail was dozing and hadn't seen him at all. He knew that Redtail would just as soon have Shadow the Weasel for dinner as himself, and a very daring plan had popped into his head.

"I may as well be caught by Redtail as Shadow," he thought as he ran up the tree, "but if my plan works out all right I won't be caught by either. Anyway, it is my very last chance."

Up the tree he scrambled, and after him went Shadow the Weasel. Shadow had been so intent on catching Chatterer that he had not noticed old Redtail, which was just as Chatterer had hoped. Up, up he scrambled, straight past old Redtail, but as he passed he pulled one of Redtail's long tail feathers, then ran on to the top of the tree and with the last bit of strength he had left leaped to a neighboring spruce tree, where, hidden by the thick branches, he stopped to rest and see what would happen.

Of course, when he felt his tail pulled old Redtail was wide awake in a flash, and, of course, he looked down to see who had dared to pull his tail. There just below him was Shadow the Weasel, who had just that minute discovered who was sitting there. Old Redtail hissed sharply, and the feathers on the top of his head stood up in a way they have when he is angry. And he was angry—very angry.

Shadow the Weasel stopped short. Then like a flash he dodged around to the other side of the tree. He had no thought of Chatterer now. Things were changed all in a flash—quite changed. Instead of the hunter he was now the hunted. Old Redtail circled in the air just overhead, and every time he caught sight of Shadow, he swooped at him with great cruel claws spread to clutch him. Shadow dodged around the trunk of the tree. He was more angry than frightened, for his sharp eyes had spied a little hollow in a branch of the chestnut tree, and he knew that once inside of that he would have nothing to fear. But he was angry clear through to think that he should be cheated out of that dinner he had been so sure of only a few minutes before. So he screamed angrily at old Redtail, and then, watching his chance, scampered out to the hollow and whisked inside just in the nick of time.

Chatterer, watching from the spruce tree, gave a great sigh of relief. He saw Redtail the Hawk post himself on the top of a tall tree where he could keep watch of that hollow in which Shadow had disappeared, and he knew that it would be a long time before Shadow would dare poke even his nose outside. Then as soon as he was rested, Chatterer stole softly, O, so softly, away through the tree tops until he was sure that Redtail could not see him. Then he hurried. Yes, indeed, he hurried then. He wanted to get just as far away from Shadow the Weasel as he could.

(The Adventures of Chatterer the Red Squirrel, Chapter 2)

STORY 575. December 16, 1913

Chatterer tells Sammy Jay about Shadow the Weasel

Chatterer, the Red Squirrel, was hurrying through the Green Forest. He didn't know just where he was going. He had but one thought, and that was to get as far away from Shadow the Weasel as he could. It made him have cold shivers all over every time he thought of Shadow.

"Seems to me you are in a great hurry," said a voice from a pine tree he was passing.

Chatterer knew that voice without looking to see who was speaking. Everybody in the Green Forest knows that voice. It was the voice of Sammy Jay.

"It looks to me as if you were running away from some one," jeered Sammy.

Chatterer wanted to stop and pick a quarrel with Sammy, as he usually did when they met, but the fear of Shadow the Weasel was still in his heart.

"I—I—am," he said in a very low voice.

Sammy looked as if he thought he hadn't heard right. Never before had he known Chatterer to admit that he was afraid, for you know Chatterer is a great boaster. It must be something very serious to frighten Chatterer like that.

"What's that?" Sammy asked sharply. "I always knew you to be a coward, but this is the first time I have ever known you to admit it. Who are you running away from?"

"Shadow the Weasel," replied Chatterer, still in a very low voice, as if he were afraid of being overheard. "Shadow the Weasel is back in the Green Forest, and I have just had such a narrow escape!"

"Ho!" cried Sammy, "This is important. I thought Shadow was up in the Old Pasture. If he has come back to the Green Forest, folks ought to know it. Where is he now?"

Chatterer stopped and told Sammy all about his narrow escape and how he had left Shadow the Weasel in a hollow of a chestnut tree with Redtail the Hawk watching for him to come out. Sammy's eyes sparkled when Chatterer told how he had pulled the tail of the old Redtail. "And he doesn't know now who did it; he thinks it was Shadow," concluded Chatterer with a weak little grin.

"Ho, ho, ho! Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Sammy Jay. "I wish I had been there to see it."

Then he suddenly grew grave. "Other folks certainly ought to know that Shadow is back in the Green Forest," said he, "so that they can be on their guard. Then if they get caught it is their own fault. I think I'll go spread the news." You see, for all his mean ways Sammy Jay does have some good in him, just as everybody does, and he dearly loves to tell important news.

"I—I wish you would go first of all and tell my cousin Happy Jack the Gray

Squirrel,” said Chatterer, speaking in a hesitating way.

Sammy Jay leaned over and looked at Chatterer sharply. “I thought you and Happy Jack were not friends,” said he. “You always seem to be quarreling.”

Chatterer looked a little confused, but he is very quick with his tongue, is Chatterer. “That’s just it,” he replied quickly. “That’s just it! If anything should happen to Happy Jack, I wouldn’t have him to quarrel with, and it is such fun to see him get mad!”

Now, of course, the real reason why Chatterer wanted Happy Jack warned was because down inside he was ashamed of that dreadful thought that had come to him of leading Shadow the Weasel to Happy Jack’s house so that he himself might escape. It had been a dreadful thought, a cowardly thought, and Chatterer had been really ashamed that he should have ever had such a thought. He thought now that if he could do something for Happy Jack, he would feel better about it.

Sammy Jay promised to go straight to Happy Jack and warn him that Shadow the Weasel was back in the Green Forest, and off he started, screaming the news as he flew, so that all the little people in the Green Forest might know. Chatterer listened a few minutes and then started on.

“Where shall I go?” he muttered. “Where shall I go? I don’t dare stay in the Green Forest, for now Shadow will never rest until he catches me.”

(The Adventures of Chatterer the Red Squirrel, Chapter 3)

STORY 576. December 17, 1913

Chatterer Leaves the Green Forest

Chatterer the Red Squirrel was in a peck of trouble. Yes, sir, he was in a peck of trouble. There was no doubt about it. “O, dear! O, dear! If only I had kept my tongue still! If only I had kept my tongue still!” he kept saying over and over to himself as he hurried through the Green Forest. You see, Chatterer was just beginning to realize what a lot of trouble an unruly tongue can get one into. Here it was cold weather, the very edge of Winter, and Chatterer didn’t dare stay in the Green Forest, where he had always made his home. His storehouses were full of nuts and seeds and corn, enough and more than enough to keep him in comfort all Winter, and now he must turn his back on them and go, he didn’t know where and all because of his mean disposition and bad tongue.

If he hadn’t called Bobby Coon names that morning at the top of his voice, Shadow the Weasel might not have found him. But Shadow did find him, and it was only by great good fortune and a sharp and daring trick that he had escaped. He knew that Shadow has a long memory, and that he would never forget that trick, and so the only way he would ever be able to have a moment’s peace would be to leave the Green Forest for as long as Shadow the Weasel chose to stay there. Chatterer shivered inside his warm red fur coat as he thought of the long, cold Winter and how hard it would be to find enough to eat. Was ever any one else in such a dreadful fix?

Presently he came to the edge of the Green Forest. He sat down to rest in the top of a tree where he could look off over the Green Meadows. Far, far away he could see the Purple Hills, behind which jolly, round, red Mr. Sun goes to bed every night. He could see the old stone wall that separates Farmer Brown's cornfield from the Green Meadows. He could see Farmer Brown's house and barn, and near them the Old Orchard, where Johnny Chuck had spent the Summer with Polly Chuck and their baby Chucks. He knew every nook and corner in the old stone wall and many times he had been to the Old Orchard. It was there that he had stolen the eggs of Drummer the Woodpecker. He laughed at the thought of those eggs, and how he had stolen them, and then he shivered as he remembered how he had finally been caught and how sharp the bills of Drummer and Mrs. Drummer were⁵⁷.

But all that was in the past and thinking about it wasn't going to help him now. He had got to do something right away. Perhaps he might find a place to live in the old stonewall, and there might, there just might, be enough grains of corn scattered over the ground of the cornfield for him to lay up a supply if he worked very hard and fast. Anyway, he would have a look. So he hurried down from the tree and out along the old stonewall. His spirits began to rise as he whisked along, peering into every hole and jumping from stone to stone. It really seemed as if he might find a snug home somewhere here. Then he remembered something that made his heart sink again. He remembered having seen Shadow the Weasel more than once exploring that very wall. Just as likely as not he would do it again, for it was so very near the Green Forest. So the old stonewall wouldn't do.

Just then along came Peter Rabbit. Peter saw right away that something was wrong with Chatterer and he I wanted to know what it was. Chatterer told him. He felt that he had just got to tell some one. Peter looked thoughtful. He scratched his long left ear with his long right hind foot.

"You know there is another old stonewall up there by the Old Orchard," said he. "It is pretty near Farmer Brown's house and Black Pussy hunts there a great deal, but you ought to be smart enough to keep out of her clutches."

"I should hope so!" exclaimed Chatterer scornfully. "I have never seen a cat yet that I was afraid of! I believe I'll go over and have a look at that old wall, Peter Rabbit"

"I'll go with you," said Peter, and off they started together.

(The Adventures of Chatterer the Red Squirrel, Chapter 4)

STORY 577. December 18, 1913

Chatterer Finds a Home

When your plans are upset and all scattered about,
Just make up your mind that you'll find a way out.

Peter Rabbit went straight over to the old stone wall on the edge of the Old Orchard. lipperty, lipperty, lip, so fast that it didn't take him long to get there. But

57 STORY 476, 1913.

Chatterer, the Red Squirrel, never feels really safe on the ground unless there is something to climb close at hand, so he went a long way round by way of the rail fences. He always did like to run along a rail fence, and he wouldn't have minded it a bit this morning if he hadn't been in such a hurry. It seemed to him that he never would get there. But, of course, he did. You know you always get somewhere if you keep on going long enough.

When he did get there, he found Peter Rabbit sitting on Johnny Chuck's doorstep staring down Johnny Chuck's long hall. "They're asleep," said he, as Chatterer came up all out of breath. "I've thumped and thumped and thumped, but it isn't the least bit of use. They are asleep and they'll stay asleep until Mistress Spring arrives. I can't understand it at all. No, sir, I can't understand how anybody can be willing to miss this splendid cold weather."

Peter shook his head in a puzzled way, and continued to stare down the long, empty hall. Of course, he was talking about Johnny and Polly Chuck, who had gone to sleep for the Winter. That sleeping business always puzzles Peter. It seems to him like a terrible waste of time. But Chatterer had too much on his mind to waste time wondering how other people could sleep all Winter. He couldn't himself, and now that he had been driven away from his own home in the Green Forest by fear of Shadow, the Weasel, he couldn't waste a minute. He must find a new home, and then spend every minute of daytime laying up a new store of food for the days when everything would be covered with snow. He shivered at the thought, for harvest days were over and he didn't just see where that food was to be found.

Up and down the length of the stone wall he scampered, looking for a place to make a home, but nothing suited him. You know he likes best to make his home in a tree. He isn't like Striped Chipmunk, who lives in the ground. Poor Chatterer! He just couldn't see how he was going to live in the old stone wall. He sat on top of a big stone to rest and think it over. He was discouraged. Life didn't seem worth living just then. He felt as if his heart had gone way down to his toes. Just then his eyes saw something that made his heart come up come again with a great bound right where it ought to be. Just then Peter Rabbit came hopping along.

"Have you found a new home yet?" asked Peter.

"Yes," replied Chatterer, "I think I have."

"That's good," replied Peter. "I was sure you would find one over here. Where is it?"

Chatterer opened his mouth to tell Peter, and then closed it with a snap. He remembered just in time how hard it is for Peter to keep a secret. If he should tell Peter, it would be just like Peter to tell some one else without meaning to, and then it might get back to Shadow, the Weasel.

"I'm not going to tell you now, Peter Rabbit," said he. "You see, I don't want anybody to know where it is until I am sure that it will do. But I'll tell you this much," he added, as he saw how disappointed Peter looked. "I'm going to live right here."

Peter brightened up right away. You see, he thought that, of course, Chatterer meant that he had found a hole in the old stone wall, and he felt very sure that he could find it by keeping watch. "That's good," he said again. "I'll see you often. But watch out for Black Pussy. Her claws are very sharp. Now I think I'll be going back to the old briar patch."

"Don't tell where I am," called Chatterer.

"I won't," replied Peter, and, as usual, he meant just what he said.

(The Adventures of Chatterer the Red Squirrel, Chapter 5)

STORY 578. December 19, 1913

Peter Rabbit Listens to the Wrong Voice

Peter Rabbit didn't play fair. No, sir. Peter didn't play fair. People who have too much curiosity about other people's affairs seldom do play fair. He didn't mean to be unfair. O, my, no! Peter didn't mean to be unfair. When he left Chatterer the Red Squirrel sitting on the old stone wall on the edge of Farmer Brown's Old Orchard he intended to go straight home to the dear old briar patch. He was a little disappointed, was Peter, that Chatterer hadn't told him just where his house was. Not that it really mattered; he just wanted to know, that was all. With every jump away from the old stone wall that desire to know just where Chatterer's new house was seemed to grow. Peter stopped and looked back. He couldn't see Chatterer now, because the bushes hid him. And if he couldn't see Chatterer, why of course Chatterer couldn't see him.

Peter sat down and began to pull his whiskers in a way he has when he is trying to decide something. It seemed as if two little voices were quarreling inside him. "Go along home like the good fellow you are, and mind your own business," said one. "Steal back to the old wall and watch Chatterer and so find out just where his new house is; he'll never know anything about it, and there'll be no harm done," said the other little voice. It was louder than the first voice and Peter liked the sound of it.

"I believe I will," said he, and without waiting to hear what the first little voice would say to that he turned about and very carefully and softly tiptoed back to the old stone wall. Right near it was a thick little bush. It seemed to Peter that it must have grown there just to give him a hiding place. He crawled under it and lay very flat. He could see along the old stone wall in both directions. Chatterer was sitting just where he had left him. He was looking in the direction that Peter had gone when he had said goodby, Peter chuckled to himself. "He's waiting to make sure I have gone before he goes to that new house of his," thought Peter. "This is the time I'll fool him."

"You ought to be ashamed of yourself, Peter Rabbit; this is none of your business," said that little small voice down inside.

"You're not doing a bit of harm. Chatterer has no business to try to keep his new house a secret anyway," said the other little voice inside. And because of his dreadful curiosity Peter liked the sound of that little voice best and listened to it, and after a

Illustrations. December 15 to December 20, 1913.



574. Chatterer's Last Chance
Up the tree he scrambled and after him went Shadow the Weasel.



575. Chatterer Tells Sammy Jay About Shadow the Weasel
"Ho, ho, ho! Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Sammy Jay. "I wish I had been there to see."



576. Chatterer Leaves the Green Forest
"You know there is another old stonewall up there by the old orchard," said he.



577. Chatterer Finds a Home
"Have you found a new home yet?" asked Peter.



578. Peter Rabbit Listens to the Wrong Voice
It was louder than the first voice, and Peter liked the sound of it.



579. How Chatterer had Fooled Peter Rabbit
And so it was that he saw Peter crawl out from under the little bush where he had been hiding.

while the first little voice grew discouraged and stopped.

Chatterer sat right where he was for what seemed to Peter a very long time. But by and by he gave a sudden funny little flirt of his tail and ran swiftly along the old wall a little way. Then with a hasty look around he disappeared in a hole. A minute later he popped his head out for a hasty look around and then disappeared again. He did this two or three times as if he was anxious.

Peter chuckled to himself. "That's his new house right there," said he to himself, "and now that I know where it is I think I'll hurry along home to the dear old briar patch." He was just getting ready to start when Chatterer popped out of his hole and sat upon a big stone. He was talking out loud and Peter listened. Then his long ears began to burn, for this is what he heard:

"I'm glad that Peter's not a spy,
For spies are hateful as can be.
It's dreadful how some people try
Affairs of other folks to see."

Chatterer whisked out of sight and Peter hurried to get away. His ears still burned, and somehow he didn't feel so tickled over the thought that he had discovered Chatterer's secret as he thought he would. And over in the hole in the stone wall Chatterer the Red Squirrel was laughing as if there was some great joke. There was, and the joke was on Peter Rabbit. You see, he hadn't discovered Chatterer's new house at all.

(The Adventures of Chatterer the Red Squirrel, Chapter 6)

STORY 579. December 20, 1913

How Chatterer had Fooled Peter Rabbit

Chatterer the Red Squirrel is a scamp himself, and not to be trusted. Nobody in the Green Forest or on the Green Meadows trusts him. And people who cannot be trusted themselves never trust anyone else. Chatterer never does. He is always suspicious. So when Peter Rabbit had said good-by and started for the dear old briar patch without knowing where Chatterer's new house was Chatterer had made up his mind right away that Peter would never be satisfied until he knew, or thought he knew, where that new house was. You see, he knew all about Peter's dreadful curiosity. Besides, not being honest himself, he didn't believe anyone else was honest.

He watched Peter out of sight, then he slipped down out of sight between the stones of the old wall. "I know what Peter will do," said he to himself. "Peter will come sneaking back and hide where he can watch me and so find out where my new house is. I'll just stay here long enough to give him a chance to hide and then I'll fool him."

You see, Chatterer knew that if he had been in Peter's place, he would have done just that thing. So he waited a little while and then went back to the place where Peter had left him. There he sat and pretended to be looking in the direction in which

Peter had gone, as if to make sure that Peter was really on his way home. But all the time Chatterer was watching out of the corners of his eyes to see if Peter was hiding anywhere near. He didn't see Peter, but he didn't have the least doubt that Peter was somewhere about.

After a while he ran over to a hole between the stones of the old wall and pretended to be very busy there just as if it really were the new house he had found. He kept popping in and out and looking around as if afraid that someone was watching him. He even got some dry leaves and took them inside as if to make a bed. All the time, although he hadn't seen a sign of Peter, he didn't have the least doubt in the world that Peter was watching him. When he grew tired, a new idea popped into his shrewd little head. He popped out of the hole and sat up on the wall. Then he said aloud that verse which had made Peter's ears burn so. He had meant to make Peter's ears burn. He said that verse just as if he really did believe that Peter was not spying on him and was glad of it. When he had finished, he whisked out of sight again to give Peter a chance to get away. But this time Chatterer did some peeking himself. He hid where Peter couldn't see him, but where he himself could see both ways along the old stone wall, and so it was that he saw Peter crawl out from under the little bush where he had been hiding and sneak away in the direction of the dear old briar patch. And he knew that this time Peter really had gone for good.

Then Chatterer laughed and laughed to think how he had fooled Peter Rabbit, and wished that he could pat himself on the back for being so smart. He didn't once think of how dishonest and mean it was of Peter to spy on him because, you see, he would have done the same thing himself and he was judging Peter by himself. "One has to have one's wits very sharp in these days to keep a secret," chuckled Chatterer.

But over in the old briar patch that afternoon Peter Rabbit sat very thoughtful and very much ashamed. The thought that he had found out where Chatterer's new house was didn't give him the pleasure that he had thought it would. His ears still burned, for he thought that Chatterer thought he was honest when he wasn't.

"I believe I'll go over tomorrow and tell Chatterer all about it and how mean I have been," said he at last. And when he had made up his mind to do this he felt better.

EXPLANATION FOR SKIP IN NUMBERING

STORY 583. December 22, 1913

Peter Rabbit Tries to Do the Right Thing

Peter Rabbit learned a long time ago that when he had done a mean or unkind thing he never could feel right in his own mind until he had admitted the wrong and said he was sorry. It was hard to do this sometimes, but afterward he always felt so much better that he often wondered why everybody didn't do the same way. You see Peter is alone a great deal, particularly when he is at home in the dear old briar patch, and when he is alone somehow that little small voice down inside that seems always trying to have him do right will keep talking in spite of all he can do if he has been

getting into mischief.

Ever since he had spied on Chatterer the Red Squirrel to find out where Chatterer's new house was that small voice had given Peter no rest at all. It quite spoiled Peter's appetite, and when Peter cannot eat you may know that he doesn't feel right at all. He felt a little better after he had made up his mind to go the very next morning and tell Chatterer how mean he had been, but he is such a happy-go-lucky little fellow that I am afraid he would have forgotten all about it if that little small voice down inside hadn't reminded him the very first thing the next morning of what he was to do.

"The sooner it's over the better," thought Peter as he ate a hasty breakfast. Then he started as fast as he could go, lipperty, lipperty, lip, for the stone wall on the edge of the Old Orchard where Chatterer had found a new home. As he drew near, he heard voices. Peter stopped to listen. While it isn't at all polite or nice to listen to what other people are saying when they don't know that you are around it is very, very necessary for the little people of the Green Forest and the Green Meadows to know who is about, so whenever they hear voices, they always stop to listen and make sure who the voices belong to. So Peter stopped and listened for just a minute. That was all he needed to make sure of the voices.

They were the voices of Chatterer and Tommy Tit the Chickadee. Peter smiled and hurried on. There was nothing to be feared from either, and he wanted to get his unpleasant errand finished. As he drew nearer, he heard Chatterer laughing fit to kill himself.

"Ha, ha, ha! Ho, ho, ho!" shouted Chatterer.

"He, he, dee, dee, dee!" laughed Tommy Tit.

"Must be a great joke; guess I'll hurry and find out what it is so I can laugh, too," thought Peter, but just that very minute he heard something that made him stop short. It was his own name.

"And doesn't Peter know now?" asked Tommy Tit between chuckles.

"No," replied Chatterer, wiping tears of laughter from his eyes, "he hasn't any more idea where my new house is than the man in the moon. He thinks he knows, but bless your heart, he hasn't any more idea than you have where it is."

"But I have more than an idea—I know where it is," replied Tommy Tit.

Chatterer stopped laughing. "What's that?" he cried sharply.

"I said that I know," replied Tommy Tit, and laughed harder than ever. "Dee, dee, dee! You can't fool me, Chatterer! I'm not Peter Rabbit and you can't fool me! Dee, dee, dee, chick-adee!"

"How do you know?" demanded Chatterer.

"Because I peeped in and saw you in bed before you were awake this morning," replied Tommy Tit. "Of course I wouldn't have peeped in if I had known that you had decided to make your home there, and now that I do know I won't be so impolite

again.”

Chatterer edged a little near to Tommy. “Say,” he begged, “promise me that you won’t give my secret away. Be a good fellow and promise not to tell any one where my new house is.”

“Of course I’ll promise,” replied Tommy promptly. “I never meddle in other people’s affairs.” With that and a farewell “dee, dee” Tommy flew over to the middle of the Old Orchard.

Peter Rabbit sat right where he was. He had come up there to try to do the right thing, and now he didn’t know just what to do.

STORY 584. December 23, 1913

Sammy Jay Brings News

Peter Rabbit had a very funny feeling. He had started out that morning with the best intentions in the world. He had meant to go straight to Chatterer and tell him how mean he had been to spy and so find the new house that Chatterer was trying to keep a secret, and then he had overheard Chatterer telling Tommy Tit the Chickadee how he had fooled Peter and how Peter didn’t know where the new house was at all. Peter had never felt more foolish in his life. No, sir, he never had felt more foolish in his life. Of course, if it was true that he had been fooled and really didn’t know where Chatterer’s new house was there was no use in begging Chatterer’s pardon, for he would only make himself still more of a laughing stock than he was already. And yet the thing he had done was just as mean as if he had found out Chatterer’s secret and he knew that he would feel better if he owned up. He scratched his left ear with his right hind foot, and then scratched his right ear with his left hind foot. He pulled his whiskers, and still he didn’t know what to do.

He was still trying to decide when he heard a great racket in the direction of the Green Forest. It was Sammy Jay, screaming noisily as usual, and he was hurrying straight up to the Old Orchard. Of course, Chatterer heard him, and as soon as Sammy was within hearing he called to him. Sammy hurried over at once.

“So here you are!” he exclaimed. “I’ve hunted all through the Green Forest for you until I’m quite tuckered out. I’ve got news for you.”

“What is it?” begged Chatterer, dancing about with impatience.

“I’ve seen Shadow the Weasel,” replied Sammy.

“Where is he?” asked Chatterer, and his voice sounded very anxious.

“He’s over in the Green Forest, and he says he is going to stay there until he catches you if he has to stay all Winter,” replied Sammy. “Old Redtail the Hawk kept him cooped up in that hollow in the old chestnut tree so long that by the time he did get out he couldn’t follow your tracks at all, and he was in a terrible rage. But he says he is going to find you if he has to hunt through every tree in the Green Forest⁵⁸.”

58 STORY 574, 1913.

Chatterer actually turned pale for a minute. “You—you didn’t tell him that I wasn’t in the Green Forest, did you?” he asked.

“Of course, I didn’t! How could I when I didn’t know it myself?” retorted Sammy, scornfully.

“And—and you won’t tell him when you see him again, will you, Sammy?” begged Chatterer.

What do you take me for?” demanded Sammy, angrily. “I haven’t got any love for you, Chatterer, and you know it. You’re a red-headed, red-coated nuisance, and I’m not a bit sorry to see you in trouble, but I wouldn’t turn my worst enemy over to such a cruel, cold-blooded robber as Shadow the Weasel. He would kill me just as quickly as he would you if he could catch me, which he can’t, and I am going to make it my business to see to it that all the little people who are afraid of him know that he is about. I am going over to the old briar patch right away to warn Peter Rabbit.

“You don’t need to, because I am right here,” spoke up Peter from his hiding place. “I am ever so much obliged to you for planning to warn me, and I’m sorry I’ve ever said mean things about you, Sammy Jay.”

“Pooh!” replied Sammy. “You needn’t be. I guess I’ve deserved them.”

Then Sammy and Peter and Chatterer began to talk over the news about Shadow the Weasel so eagerly that not one of them saw Black Pussy stealing along the old stone wall.

(The Adventures of Sammy Jay, Chapter 5)

STORY 585. December 24, 1913

Black Pussy Almost Catches a Good Breakfast

Black Pussy was out very early hunting for her breakfast. Not that she needed to hunt for her breakfast! O, my, no! Black Pussy didn’t need for a single thing. Every morning Farmer Brown’s boy filled a saucer with warm fresh milk for her, and every day she had all the meat that was good for her; so there wasn’t the least need in the world for her to go hunting. Black Pussy was just like all cats. Lying before the fire in Farmer Brown’s house, blinking and purring contentedly, she seemed too good-natured and gentle to hurt any one, and all Farmer Brown’s family said that she was, and believed it. They knew nothing about the empty little nests in the joyful springtime—empty because Black Pussy had found them and emptied them and broken the hearts of little father and mother birds.

You see, Farmer Brown’s folks really didn’t know Black Pussy. But the little forest and meadow people did. They knew that Black Pussy was just like all cats—fierce and cruel down inside, and they hated Black Pussy, every one of them. They knew that down in her heart was the love of killing, just that same love of killing that is in the heart of Shadow the Weasel, and so they hated Black Pussy. If she had had to hunt for a living they wouldn’t have minded so much, but she didn’t have to hunt for a living, and

so they hated her twice as much.

This particular morning Black Pussy had chosen to have a look along the old stone wall on the edge of the Old Orchard. Many times she had hunted Striped Chipmunk there. She didn't know enough about the ways of the little people of the Green Forest and the Green Meadows to know that this cold weather had sent Striped Chipmunk down into his snug bedroom under ground for a long sleep, so she sneaked along from stone to stone, hoping that she would surprise him. She had gone half the length of the old wall without a sign of anything to catch when she heard voices that put all thought of Striped Chipmunk out of her head. Crawling flat on her stomach to keep out of sight, she softly worked nearer and nearer until, peeping from behind a big stone in the old wall she could see Chatterer the Red Squirrel, Peter Rabbit and Sammy Jay talking so busily, and so much excited, that they didn't seem to be paying attention to anything else.

Sammy Jay was safe because he was sitting in an old apple tree, but Chatterer was on the old wall, and Peter was on the ground. Which should she catch? Peter would make the biggest and best breakfast, but Black Pussy hadn't forgotten the terrible kick⁵⁹ he had once given her when she had caught little Miss Fuzzytail up in the Old Pasture, and she had great respect for Peter's stout hind legs. She would be content to catch Chatterer this morning. She hated him anyway, for he had been very saucy to her many times. He would never make fun of her or call her names again.

More slowly and carefully than ever Black Pussy stole forward. Her eyes grew yellow with excitement, and fierce and cruel. Carefully she drew her feet under her to make the jump. The end of her black tail twitched with eagerness. Just as she got ready to spring there was a shrill scream from Sammy Jay. He had caught sight of the moving of that tail, and he knew what it meant. Black Pussy sprang, but she was just too late. Chatterer had dived head first down between the stones of the old wall at the sound of Sammy's scream, and Peter had dived head first into Johnny Chuck's house, on the doorstep of which he happened to be sitting.

Black Pussy looked up at Sammy Jay and snarled at him in a terrible rage. Sammy shrieked at her just as angrily. Then when her head was turned for just an instant he darted down and actually pulled a tuft of hair from her coat and was safely out of the way before she could turn and spring. Then Black Pussy thrust a paw down between the stones where Chatterer had disappeared. She pulled it out again with a howl of pain, for sharp little teeth had bitten it. Slowly and sullenly Black Pussy turned and limped back toward Farmer Brown's house. She suddenly remembered that saucer of milk, and that that was really all the breakfast she wanted.

(The Adventures of Sammy Jay, Chapter 6)

NO STORY. December 25, 1913

Mr. Thornton W. Burgess, the woods and meadows reporter, stayed at home with his own small boy today and he was too busy getting a Christmas tree ready to write a

59 STORY 455, 1913.

Illustrations. December 22 to December 27, 1913.



583. Peter Rabbit Tries to Do the Right Thing
“Guess I’ll hurry and find out what it is so I can laugh, too,” thought Peter



584. Sammy Jay Brings News
“Pooh!” replied Sammy. “You needn’t be. I guess I’ve deserved them.”



585. Black Pussy Almost Catches a Good Breakfast
Black Pussy



586. Chatterer fixes up his new homet
Now I must fix my house for the winter.



587. Chatterer Works Hard
It looked to him as if that rail was hollow part way.

*bedtime story*⁶⁰. So here is a different sort of a bedtime story, one that German fathers love to tell their children [*“The Spiders and the Christmas Tree”*]...Tomorrow we shall hear from the Green Meadows folk again. (Kansas City Star, December 25, 1913, page 4)

STORY 586. December 26, 1913

Chatterer Fixes Up His New Home

“Whew!” exclaimed Chatterer the Red Squirrel as he scrambled up to his new house, “life is certainly very exciting these days. First Shadow the Weasel almost catches me and I have to leave the Green Forest, and then Black Pussy, that pesky cat from Farmer Brown’s, almost catches me! I wonder what will happen next. One has to have one’s ears and eyes open all the time. Yes, sir, it certainly is very exciting. Now, I must fix my new house for the Winter and hurry to lay in a new store of food. It’s a mighty good thing that nobody but Tommy Tit the Chickadee knows where my new house is. Even Sammy Jay’s sharp eyes haven’t discovered it yet, and as for Peter Rabbit, I don’t believe he’ll ever find it. I think it was very clever of me to think of taking the old house of Drummer the Woodpecker which forms my new one. Wouldn’t he be surprised if he knew that I was here?” Chatterer chuckled. He was thinking of how he had stolen Drummer’s eggs from that very hollow in the old apple tree in the Spring, and how little he had thought then that he ever would be living there.

The idea of living in Drummer’s old house had come to Chatterer all in a flash the very afternoon he had come up to the Old Orchard, after being driven out of the Green Forest by fear of Shadow the Weasel. He had hunted all along the old stone wall for a place to make a new home and hadn’t found a single place to suit him. He had sat up to rest and just by chance he had happened to look over to the old apple tree he remembered so well, and right in a flash the great idea had come to him. Everybody knew how dreadfully he had been punished by Drummer the Woodpecker for stealing his eggs in the Spring, and no one would think of him going to live in Drummer’s house after that. It certainly was a great idea. You see Drummer had long ago given up the house himself. He had no use for it after he had brought up his family, and so it was standing empty.

Sammy Jay had gone back to the Green Forest, Peter Rabbit had gone back to the dear old briar patch and Black Pussy had sneaked back to Farmer Brown’s house for that saucer of milk, so now there was none to interfere with Chatterer and his work. After he had rested a few minutes, he ran down the old apple tree and over to a pile of dry leaves along the stone wall. In a few minutes he was back in the apple tree with as many as he could carry. He looked this way and that way, to make sure that none was watching, and then whisked inside Drummer’s old house. When he got ready to come out again, he first peeked out, to be sure that no one was about. When he was sure, absolutely sure, he darted out and down after more leaves.

So Chatterer worked as hard as ever he could, taking leaves and soft grass and strips of soft lining of bark into the hole in the apple tree, and never once forgetting to

60 See Appendix 3, The Joy of the Beautiful Pine

watch out that no one saw him. At last he had enough for a warm, comfortable bed and had fixed it just to suit him.

Now let the wind blow
And bring the white snow
As soon as ever it pleases;
I'll be warm and snug
As a bug in a rug.
And don't care a snap when it freezes.

So said Chatterer as he finished his bed making. And then suddenly he remembered that he hadn't anything to eat when the snow should come and cover the ground.

STORY 587. December 27, 1913

Chatterer Works Hard

When Chatterer the Red Squirrel had left the Green Forest because of his terrible fear of Shadow the Weasel he had been fat. At least he had been fat for him. All through the pleasant fall, while he had been gathering his supply of nuts and seeds to store away for the winter, he had eaten all he could hold and had filled his red coat out until it actually felt too tight. But now that same red coat hung so loose on Chatterer that it looked too big for him. Yes, sir, Chatterer had grown so thin that his coat actually looked too big for him. And he was growing thinner every day.

You see most of the food had been collected and stored away long ago, and Chatterer had to run about a great deal and hunt very hard to find enough to eat day by day, while as for filling a new storehouse, that seemed impossible. Still Chatterer kept trying and day by day, he managed to add a little to the supply of seeds. But it was pretty poor fare at best. There were no plump nuts or tasty pine seeds such as filled his storehouses in the Green Forest, because no nut or pine trees grew near the Old Orchard, and Chatterer didn't dare go back to the Green Forest for fear that Shadow the Weasel would find him and track him to his new home. So he patiently did his best to find food close at hand. But it was discouraging, terribly discouraging, to work from sunup to sundown, running here, running there, running everywhere, until he was so tired he was ready to drop, and knowing all the time that the snow might come any day and bury what little food there was. Oh, those were hard days for Chatterer the Red Squirrel, very hard days, indeed!

One morning he started very early and made a long journey by way of the old stone wall and the rail fences down to Farmer Brown's cornfield. Of course, Farmer Brown had long ago taken away the corn, but in doing it a great many grains had been scattered about on the ground, half buried in the ground where they had been trodden on, hidden under leaves and among weeds and under the piles of stalks from which the ears had been stripped. For the first time for days Chatterer felt something like cheer in his heart as he scurried about hunting for and finding the plump yellow grains. First he ate all he could hold, for he saw that then there would be plenty to take home. Then he stuffed his cheeks full, scrambled up on the rail fence and started for his new home in

the Old Orchard.

"It is a terrible long way to have to carry all my supplies," thought he as he sat up on the top of a post to rest. "I don't see how I ever can do it. Well, I certainly can't if I sit here all day!" With that he jumped down to the rail below him. He was halfway across when he noticed a crack in it. It looked to him as if that rail was hollow part way. A great idea came to him. His eyes grew bright with excitement. He ran the length of the rail and back again, looking for an opening. There was none. Then very slowly and carefully he worked his way back, stretching his head over so that he could look underneath. Almost over to the next post he found what he had so hoped to find. What was it? Why, a knot hole. Yes, sir, a knot hole that opened right into the hollow in the rail. It wasn't quite big enough for Chatterer to squeeze through, but that didn't trouble him. He emptied the corn from his cheeks and then he went to work with those sharp teeth of his, and in a little while, a very little while, that knot hole was plenty big enough for Chatterer to slip through.

His eyes snapped with pleasure as he explored the hollow rail. "I'll make this my storehouse!" he cried. "I'll fill it full of corn, and then when I am hungry in the winter I can run down here and fill up. It will be a lot better than trying to carry the corn up to the Old Orchard." And with that Chatterer began the work of filling the hollow rail with corn.

(The Adventures of Sammy Jay, Chapter 7)

STORY 588. December 29, 1913

Sammy Jay Drops a Hint

Whatever faults Chatterer the Red Squirrel may have, and they are many, laziness is not one of them. No, siree, there is no laziness about Chatterer. When he has work to do he does it, and he keeps at it until it is finished. Every morning he got up with the sun and raced along an old stone wall and the rail fences down to Farmer Brown's cornfield, where he first ate his breakfast and then worked to fill the hollow rail of the fence which he had made into a storehouse. It was hard work, because he had to do a great deal of hunting for the corn, and it was exciting work, because he had to keep his eyes and ears open every minute to keep from furnishing a dinner for someone else.

Redtail the Hawk, who had not yet gone South, discovered him one morning, and Chatterer had dodged behind a fencepost just in time. After that Redtail was on hand every morning watching from the top of a tree for Chatterer to grow careless and get too far from shelter. Then one morning Reddy Fox surprised him at the edge of a heap of cornstalks. Chatterer had just time to wriggle his way to the middle of the heap. Reddy had seen him and he could smell him. Very softly Reddy tiptoed around the pile of corn stalks to see if Chatterer had come out on the other side. Then he came back to where Chatterer had gone in, and excitedly began to dig, making the dry stalks fly right and left. He made so much noise that Chatterer felt sure that he wouldn't hear him move, and he didn't. By the time Reddy had worked his way to the middle of the pile Chatterer was safe in his storehouse in the hollow rail. He had slipped from under the

cornstalks, run across to another pile, worked his way through this, and so reached the fence.

After that Reddy Fox came every morning hoping to surprise Chatterer. But Chatterer felt quite equal to fooling Reddy and Redtail. Of course they interfered with his work, and were very bothersome, but he wasn't afraid of them. The one thing he did fear was that Shadow the Weasel would hear where he was. That thought bothered him a great deal.

One morning Sammy Jay just happened along. He saw Reddy Fox creeping up behind some bushes on the edge of the cornfield, and at once Sammy began to scream as he always does when he thinks he can spoil Reddy's hunting. Reddy looked up at him and showed all his long teeth, but Sammy only grinned and screamed the louder. Then Reddy walked away with a great deal of dignity, for he knew that it wasn't of the least use to try to hunt while Sammy Jay was about. When he had disappeared in the Green Forest, Sammy returned to the cornfield, and there he found Chatterer hard at work

"I'm much obliged. Sammy, for driving that nuisance away; he bothers me a great deal, and I've got to do a lot of work yet to fill my storehouse before it is too late," said Chatterer as he hurried to the hollow rail with his mouth full of corn.

"Have you moved down here?" demanded Sammy Jay "I thought you were living up in the Old Orchard."

"I am. At least my house is up there, but there is no food there, and so I have made a storehouse down here and am trying to get it full of corn before snow comes, replied Chatterer. "It will be a long way to come for your food every day," said Sammy.

"I know it," replied Chatterer, but I guess I'm lucky to have any food to come for."

"Pooh!" said Sammy. "I wouldn't work as you do. I'd use my wits a little. If corn is what you want to eat why don't you go up to Farmer Brown's? It's nearer to the old Orchard than this, and the corn is all stored ready for you to help yourself. I get all I want there."

(The Adventures of Sammy Jay, Chapter 8)

STORY 589. December 30, 1913

Chatterer Screws up his Courage

Ever since Sammy Jay had dropped a hint about the plentiful supply of corn over at Farmer Brown's, and how easy it was to get all that one wanted, Chatterer had been trying to screw up his courage to go see for himself if Sammy had told the truth. Chatterer had spent most of his life in or close to the Green Forest. He had a very wholesome fear of Farmer Brown's boy and his dreadful gun, and he always had been content to keep away from Farmer Brown's dooryard. The truth is he was afraid to go up there. You see, there were Black Pussy the Cat and Bowser the Hound and Farmer

Brown's boy; why, it was a terribly dangerous place.

And yet Sammy Jay went up there every day and didn't seem to be in the least afraid. He even scolded and said impudent things to Farmer Brown's boy. If Sammy dared go up there, why shouldn't he? He certainly was as brave as Sammy Jay! Right down in his heart Chatterer had always thought Sammy Jay very much of a coward. Yet here was Sammy going up there and helping himself to corn just as if it belonged to him. Chatterer thought of how hard he worked every day to fill that storehouse in the hollow fence rail, and of how every minute of the time he had to watch out for Redtail the Hawk and Reddy Fox. It seemed as if he never, never could get enough corn to keep him all Winter. And then it was a long way to go every day, way from the Old Orchard down to the cornfield. Chatterer sighed at the thought.

"If Sammy Jay told me the truth and it is so easy to get all the corn one wants over there at Farmer Brown's it will be ever so much easier in bad weather than going way down to my storehouse," thought Chatterer. "Anyway, it won't do any harm to have a look and see for myself how things are."

So Chatterer started running briskly along the old stone wall which led right up to Farmer Brown's yard. As he drew near, he would stop every few steps to make sure that the way was clear. At last, he reached the very end of the wall, and, hiding between two stones, he peeked out. Right across a wide road was Farmer Brown's house, and in the sun on the back doorstep sat Black Pussy dozing. Chatterer had hard work to hold his tongue. The very sight of her made him so angry that he almost forgot that he didn't want to be seen. He just longed to tell her what he thought of her. But he kept still and set his sharp little eyes to discover where Farmer Brown kept his corn. He could see Bowser the Hound fast asleep in front of his own special little house. He could see the big barn and the henhouse and the shed where the wagons were kept, and the long woodshed.

"I wonder," said Chatterer to himself; "I wonder if that corn is kept in any of those places, and how Sammy Jay gets it."

Just then Farmer Brown's boy came out of the barn. Chatterer dodged back at sight of him. He wanted to scold just as he had wanted to scold at Black Pussy, but he wisely held his tongue. Farmer Brown's boy didn't even look toward him, but went straight over to a queer little building standing high on four legs, and with wide cracks between the boards of the walls through which something yellow showed. Farmer Brown's boy went up several steps and opened a door. Chatterer gave a little gasp. There was the corn, more than he ever had seen in all his life, more corn than he had supposed the whole world held! Chatterer made up his mind right then and there that he was going to have some of that corn in spite of Black Pussy and Bowser the Hound and Farmer Brown's boy. The very sight of it screwed his courage up till he felt brave enough to dare anything.

(The Adventures of Sammy Jay, Chapter 9)

Chatterer Studies a Way to Get Farmer Brown's Corn

Chatterer the Red Squirrel could think of but one thing—Farmer Brown's house full of corn, and how he could get some of it. Sammy Jay had said that he got all he wanted, and Chatterer made up his mind that he would see how Sammy did it. So he hid among the stones of the old wall, where he could keep watch, and waited as patiently as he knew how. But though he waited and waited Sammy Jay didn't come. "Must be he comes early in the morning," thought Chatterer.

So very early the next morning, even before jolly round red Mr. Sun had kicked his night clothes off for his daily climb up in the blue, blue sky, Chatterer was in his hiding place between the stones of the old wall. Just as Mr Sun shot his first rays in at the windows of Farmer Brown's house, Sammy Jay arrived. For a wonder he made no noise. Chatterer noticed this right away. Sammy peered this way and that and without making the least sound. When he was quite sure that no one was about he flew over to the queer little house on four legs where Farmer Brown kept his corn and thrust his bill in between the wide cracks of the wall. In this way he helped himself to all the corn he wanted without the least bit of trouble. When he had enough, he flew away as still as he had come. There wasn't a sound from him until he was nearly over to the Green Forest.

Chatterer grinned. "Sammy has taught me something, although he doesn't know it," said he to himself. "He's stealing that corn and he doesn't think it safe to be found out. I must be just as careful as he is."

There were no signs of any one around Farmer Brown's house. Chatterer scurried across the yard as fast as his little legs would take him straight for the little house where the corn was kept. There he found a great disappointment. He couldn't get up to the cracks through which Sammy Jay had helped himself to corn. You see, the little house stood on four stone legs, and before it had been put on those four legs an old pan had been placed bottom up on each leg. It would be the hardest kind of work to climb one of those stone legs anyway, and even if he did succeed in climbing it there was no way of getting around that tin pan at the top, and, of course, he couldn't gnaw through it. Chatterer ground his teeth with anger. It was so terribly provoking to be so near such a feast and still not be able to get to it. He wished he had wings like Sammy Jay.

Chatterer was so intent on studying out some way to get at that corn that he quite forgot everything else. The rustle of a leaf made him turn his head. Goodness gracious! There was Black Pussy within two jumps of him, and her eyes were yellow with fierce desire. Chatterer darted to the nearest tree and whisked around to the opposite side, as he had learned to do in the Green Forest when escaping from his enemies. Then he scrambled up as fast as he could. He heard a scratching of claws and looked down to find Black Pussy scrambling up after him.

Then how Chatterer did scold! He wasn't the least bit afraid now, because he knew that he could run out on the little branches where Black Pussy would not dare to follow him. So he faced about and he called Black Pussy everything bad he knew of. He dared

her to come catch him. He said she was a coward. He laughed in her face. And all the time Black Pussy could do nothing but hang on for her life and growl and spit. Finally, she backed down, Chatterer following her almost to the ground. When she had slunk away, he scampered back to the top of the tree to think matters over, and right there he discovered a way to get the corn from Farmer Brown's little house.

(The Adventures of Sammy Jay, Chapter 10)

Illustrations. December 29 to December 31, 1913.



588. Sammy Jay Drops a Hint
Redtail the Hawk discovered him one morning and Chatterer dodged behind a fence post just in time.



589. Chatterer Screws Up His Courage
The very sight of it screwed his courage up till he felt brave enough to dare anything.



590. Chatterer Studies a Way to Get Farmer Brown's Corn
Chatterer darted to the nearest tree and whisked around to the opposite side.

Appendix 1. Thornton W. Burgess's 1913 Promotion and Reception.

Unlike 1912, documentation of Thornton W. Burgess's promotion and reception in 1913 is too voluminous to place in strict chronological order. This appendix is organized into the following sections: Promotion, Letters to the Editor, and References to Thornton W. Burgess/Little Stories for Bedtime, with special sections documenting the "Baby Chuck" and "Harrison Cady" controversies discussed in this volume's introduction.

PROMOTION

Boston Globe, February 9, 1913 page 39.

The most popular stories published anywhere are the LITTLE STORIES FOR BEDTIME By Thornton W. Burgess, which appear every day in the Globe. Mr. Burgess is our reporter of the wonderful adventures of Peter Rabbit, Granny Fox, Hooty the Owl, Danny Meadow Mouse, and the other people of the Green Forest, who play about the Smiling Pool and raid Farmer Brown's barns and fields on moonlight nights.

THE BEST CHILDREN'S STORIES NOW BEING WRITTEN EVERY DAY IN THE GLOBE¹.

Unusual! Unsurpassable! Unrivalled! Unique!

This is something fathers, mothers and teachers have been looking for years. A delightfully interesting collection of stories about the doings of the animals who dwell in woodland, field and farm by one of the masters of the English language. Animal characters that challenge comparison with the best in the works of any writer from Aesop to Joel Chandler Harris.

Read Them to the Children!

Have Your Boys and Girls Read Them!

Let Them Get Acquainted With "Hooty the Owl," "Danny Meadow Mouse," And All the Others

Let Everybody Read Them!

They Appear in New England Only in the Boston Daily Globe.

Arrange to Have the Daily Globe Regularly in Your Home. Every Woman Should Read "The Household Page" in the Daily Globe.

Los Angeles Evening Express, February 15, 1913, page 1, above header.

"Little Stories for Bedtime" by Thornton W. Burgess, Have Taken Los Angeles by Storm. You Must Read Them.

Chicago Daily News, April 26, 1913, page 11 [with photo]

HAVE YOU A LITTLE BOY OR GIRL?

Does your little boy or girl ever come pattering up to you, barefooted, at twilight

1 This copy was printed in other Associated Newspaper member papers, including the *Salt Lake Telegram*, the *Los Angeles Express*, and the *Houston Chronicle*.

and say "Tell me a thtory?"

And if you try to tell one, how much of a success are you in doing it?

The picture above illustrates what is happening in thousands of Chicago homes just now because the *Daily News* is printing Thornton W. Burgess' "Bedtime Stories." In those thousands of homes there are mothers reading out of *The Daily News* and little Freddies or little Mamies listening. The mothers wear just that tender and humorous expression you see in the picture, and the child has the rapt look on the face of the little chap in pajamas.

No use talking! Peter Rabbit, Johnny Chuck, Unc' Billy Possum and the rest of Mr. Burgess's creations are great stuff.

The Daily News prints a "Bedtime Story" every day on page 10.

***Houston Chronicle*, May 6, 1913, page 1**

CHRONICLE ONLY FEATURE GREAT JOY TO KIDDIES

"Little Stories for Bedtime," a feature that has been running exclusively in *The Chronicle* for a long time, is claimed by many to be the world's finest series for little children. Thousands of fathers and mothers read them each evening to their "kiddies." They are a daily feature in *The Chronicle*.

These stories are written by Thornton W. Burgess, who has won fame by writing things to please the little ones. They are copyrighted. Today's story is entitled "The Meeting by the Smiling Pool." Look for them daily. Today's "sample" is found below. [that day's story was run on front page]

***Chicago Daily News*, May 10, 1913, page 14**

ABOUT THE BEDTIME STORIES.

Dear Mr. Burgess:—

We like your Bedtime Stories very much. My mother reads them to me every night. I like them but I think I would like them better if they were longer. It seems to me that you leave off at the most exciting part of the story.

Your's truly, Willard and Wayne Holmes. [photographed]

This is a photograph of a letter written by two little boys who like the "Bedtime Stories" that are printed in *The Daily News*. They like these stories so well they just had to write to Mr. Thornton W. Burgess, the author, and tell him about them, and also to urge him to make them longer. The letter is reproduced here to show that *The Daily News* doesn't mind having little boys say what they think.

If there are Wide-Awakers—and there must be—who enjoy the adventures of Unc' Billy Possum, Johnny Chuck and the other characters of the "Bedtime Stories," they will find one of these tales on page 10 of *The Daily News* every day.

***Houston Chronicle*, June 3, 1913, page 7**

THEY ARE AFTER THAT \$15; MANY WRITING "REASONS" WHY FEATURES ARE GOOD

Nobody in town is getting more mail than the "Feature Editor" of *The Chronicle* these days. Many readers are trying to win those two prizes offered the other

day, \$10 and \$5, for the best 100 words in praise of some one of *The Chronicle's* exclusive features. Up to the present time the Little Stories for Bedtime" are in the lead.

They have jumped ahead of both Mutt and Jeff and Dr. Crane's wonderful copyrighted editorials. The replies must all be in by June 15. Don't write more than 100 words or you can't get any of the money.

...

Miss Bessie Burnes of Burnet, Texas, a primary teacher, writes as follows:

"Nature study to primary teachers presents a difficult problem. Their goal in this as in other things is the children's visualization. This goal can be reached in few better ways than by amusing stories which contain laws of nature stated in a simple manner. The Bedtime Stories are so interesting to children that they learn many truths of nature without realizing they are learning a lesson. These stories, by awakening in the children an interest in the little meadow and forest people, stimulate their most valuable sense of perception—observation.

WP. Singleton of Rusk, Texas, is for the Bedtime Stories. He says that these stories teach the kiddies a love for newspapers and information that will last them a lifetime. He sees the desire for reading growing and developing into things of "inestimable value."

A banker, who modestly requests that his name be withheld, writes this:

"Little Stories for Bedtime" is the best feature of *The Houston Chronicle*, not only because of their nearness to nature, rendering them very interesting to children and affording parents this needed means of entertaining the little ones around the fireside, but, being heard at this sacred place and tender age, the impressions are lasting. In after years the lessons may be recalled by some man or woman and cause him or her to pause amid life's hurry and bestow a charitable deed upon some unfortunate fellow being. Thus, each little story may prove to be a sunbeam. Who knows?!

Mrs. Ida Loughridge of Eldridge, Texas, believes that the greatest lesson for little children lies in the "Stories for Bedtime." She says it awakens in the minds of the little ones a love for nature and makes them forget everything unpleasant....

***Houston Chronicle*, June 6, 1913**

EXCLUSIVE FEATURES GETTING ALL SORTS OF PRAISE; SOME OF THE LETTERS ARE GIVEN

Praise for *The Chronicle's* "exclusive features" comes in—pouring in—in every mail...Mutt and Jeff and Little Stories for Bedtime seem to be running a neck-and-neck race.

...

F.T. Flint of Smithville, Texas, has offered the following as his reasons why "Little Stories for Bedtime" is the best feature in *The Chronicle*:

"My little boy scampers off after hearing what Johnny Chuck or Peter Rabbit has been doing this time.

"In my little boy's eagerness for "Little Stories for Bedtime" I am again made to

review my own happy childhood days, when "Alice in Wonderland," "Hiawatha," and "Black Beauty" were my source of delight and I see myself again as a little boy whose imagination and growing mind must be cultivated and fed upon proper teaching and stories illustrated by a good moral that will make a lasting impression upon the ever sensitive mind of a child."...

***Springfield Republican*, June 7, 1913, page 19**

NOTES AMONG THE PUBLISHERS

Thornton W. Burgess of Springfield, formerly one of the editors of *Good Housekeeping* and now rapidly become known as an author of wholesome and attractive books of natural history and out-door life for children, receives a page of attention in the summer pamphlet "About Books" brought out by Little, Brown & Co. to advertise their publications. In this it is announced that a fourth and final² volume in the series of his "Mother West Wind's Neighbors" will be published in the autumn, and at the same time there will be begun a new series called "Bedtime Story Books." Each book is to be devoted to the adventures of one animal and the first two titles will be "The Adventures of Reddy Fox" and "The Adventures of Johnny Chuck."

***Oregon Daily Journal*, June 7, 1913, page 1**

BEDTIME STORIES

As a feature for the little folks, a series of stories by Thornton W. Burgess is being published daily on the woman's page of *The Journal*.

No more delightful stories for children are available. If there are little ones in your household, let them enjoy this feature of THE JOURNAL each day.

***Houston Chronicle*, June 10, 1913, page 8**

FEATURES OF THE CHRONICLE CAUSE READERS TO "SWAMP" EDITOR WITH TESTIMONIALS

...

Mrs. C. N. Elliott. 2111 Lamar street, Houston, picks "Little Stories for Bedtime," and these are her reasons: "The best special feature of *The Chronicle* is 'Little Stories for Bed-time.' Our children of today become the men and women of tomorrow. Anything that tends to make them better should be encouraged. These stories teach nature lessons attractively, meanwhile giving the children a taste for pure literature. They sweeten the thoughts of the children and give them pleasant dreams. But best of all, they make the children kind and sympathetic toward all dumb brutes."

Durell Miller Carothers. 202 Gray Avenue, Houston, offers this as an entry in the contest:

"The Chronicle man, he wants us ter say
What's the best in his paper ev'ry day.

2 This would not, in fact, be the last book in the Mother West Wind series. Burgess began providing monthly stories to the *People's Home Journal* in April, 1913 and these would fill several more volumes of Mother West Wind books.

Wy! seems ter me at the folks 'ud all see.
At the 'Bed-Times' the best what ever cood be.
You see. Ise a kid—what's almost four;
At night I patter acwoss the floor—
Ise tired of my play-toys, the fun's all gone—
An' Muver, she puts my nightie on.
I clime in her lap; Ise the happiest chap
When she weads ter me—I never do gap.
Muver, she says 'at they's good fer me.
Ise learnin' 'bout nature and kindness, you see."

Houston Chronicle, June 16, 1913

Prize Winners Are Picked Out...

Dr. Frank Crane has been declared by the readers of the *Chronicle* to be the author of the "best exclusive feature" in the *Chronicle*...Next came Mutt and Jeff and "Little Stories for Bedtime." These ran a neck-and-neck race for second.

Kansas City Star, July 25, 1913 page 2

Dear Mr. Nelson

I am a little over ten years old but I read the Bed-time Stories every night. I began reading them about the first of February. I saved them from the fourth of March, the beginning of the "Sammy Jay" Stories.

I am so interested in them that I would like to know something about Thornton W. Burgess, the author: whether he is married and has any children or not I want to know. Also, if you couldn't print the Bed-time Stories in book-form...I want the Bed time Stories printed this way because I have only saved those from March fourth until now and I would like to have the Bed-time Stories before this time,
Yours truly,

Victor Wellington Peters³

[The editor responds:]

Master Victor Wellington Peters is only one of very, very many of the little readers of *The Star* who have written to ask about the man who writes the "Little Stories for Bedtime." And there have been not a few grownups in the list, as well, so *The Star* has decided to tell all it knows about the Green Meadows and Green Forest reporter, and then it will let Mr. Burgess himself tell how he came to write the "Bedtime Stories."

Many little folks have asked where the Green Meadows and the Green Forest could be found. A boy whose home is down in the Ozarks in Southern Mississippi was certain he had discovered them near his home. And at that he was about right. For you see, children, there is a Green Meadow and a Green Forest not so very far from any of our homes, and all the little folks Mr. Burgess writes about can be found there if you will only look for them.

But the meadow and the forest to which Mr. Burgess goes for his stories are on Cape Cod, in Massachusetts, where he was born in 1874. As a boy he loved the

3 A photograph of this letter was published in *The Star*.

out of doors and the birds and the wild animals, and studied them, never thinking that some day he would be writing stories about them for thousands of others to read. After he grew up he tried to be a bookkeeper, but his head was full of stories that got in the way of the long columns of figures, so he quit his place and became a newspaper man. And how he finally found his life work he will tell you himself. And maybe you'll have an opportunity to see him, for he is going to make a lecture tour and tell stories for the benefit of children. Also, and this answers a question lots and lots of little folks and their mothers and fathers have asked *The Star*, the "Bedtime Stories" are going to be put in book form. One book will be called "The Adventures of Reddy Fox" and the other "The Adventures of Johnny Chuck." He already has published such books as "Old Mother Wind" (sic), "Mother West Wind's Children," and "Mother West Wind's Animal Friends." He writes Boy Scout stories, too, such as "The Boy Scouts of Woodcraft Camp." Oh yes. So many persons want to know if Mr. Burgess is married and if he has any children. His wife is the person who sees the "Bedtime Stories" before any of us do, and the youngest of his three children is the one for whom the first of the stories was written, but we'll let Mr. Burgess tell about that himself.⁴

***Kansas City Star*, July 25, 1913 page 2**

HOW I CAME TO WRITE THE BEDTIME STORIES

BY THORNTON W. BURGESS

The editor of your paper has written to me asking me to tell you how I came to write the "Little Stories for Bedtime" which he is good enough to print every night. Perhaps you have guessed that they were first written for someone in particular. They were—for a little blue-eyed boy who had gone away for a visit, leaving daddy very lonely, especially at story telling time, just before the sandman came. It was the night after he left that Old Mother West Wind slipped in at my window and whispered a story about Johnny Chuck and the Green Meadows. Of course I reached for my pen and wrote it just as she told it to me, and gave it that very night to Uncle Sam to take to the little boy who had gone visiting. Every night after that Old Mother West Wind would whisper a story while I wrote it down and every day Uncle Sam would take one of these stories in his mail to be read at bedtime to the little boy and the two little cousins whom he was visiting.

When he got back home again he wanted more stories and the two little cousins he had been visiting wanted more stories. Then the editor of a magazine who had seen some of them was sure that his little boy and girl readers wanted them too. So then there was nothing for me to do but to go down on the Green Meadows and beg Old Mother West Wind and Grandfather Frog and Johnny Chuck and Peter Rabbit and the other little people who live there for more stories.

Then the editor of your newspaper wanted a story every night for you and when I found that the little meadow and forest people were sure that they had no end of stories for me I promised to write one every day. So now instead of writing stories for one particular boy alone I write for him and for you. And every night as his mother reads the Bedtime Story to him I like to think that in other homes all over

⁴ This is an adaptation of the biographical material sent to Associated Newspapers. For a full version of this biography, See below, *Evening World-Herald*, August 25

this big land of ours are other little boys, and little girls, too, who perhaps are also learning to love the little meadow and forest people. You see, I love them dearly myself, and I want everybody else to love them, particularly little boys and girls. Then when they grow up they will know what lots of grown people do not know today—that the little wild people of the Green Meadows and the Green Forest really want to be their friends and that many of them are really working the best they know how to help us. I don't believe that they would be hunted and frightened so much if everyone knew that, do you?

Johnny Chuck has his home not very far from mine, and Happy Jack Squirrel visits my yard almost every day. Sammy Jay is a good deal of a rascal and I wish he wouldn't wake me so early in the morning, but I like him in spite of his bad habits. Jimmy Skunk says that people don't understand him, and that if they did they wouldn't be afraid of him, because he always minds his own business and really does a great deal of good. He doesn't see why hens shouldn't lay eggs for him as well as for other people and doesn't see why he should be blamed for helping himself when people put temptation in his way by leaving their henhouses open. Nobody is altogether proof against temptation, especially when they don't see anything wrong in what they are doing.

But I started out to tell you how I came to write the Bedtime Stories, and here I am writing about my little animal friends. You see, I think about them so much that every time I take my pen up it seems as if I just had to write about them. I have had lots of the nicest letters from little boys and girls all over the country, and you have no idea how much pleasure these letters give me. They make me feel acquainted. So now, while I still write the stories for one particular little boy, I feel that I am also writing them quite as much for hundreds of other little friends, and you can't think how good it is to feel that so many are really enjoying the little stories I like so well to tell.

Evening World-Herald, August 25, 1913, page 4

STORY OF THE AUTHOR, MR. BURGESS

Thornton W. Burgess, author of the Bedtime Stories, was born in the town of Sandwich, Mass., in 1874. In the fields and woods and on the salt marshes of old Cape Cod, for Sandwich is the first town on the Cape, was laid the foundation for his future work. From early boyhood all his spare time was spent in the open, fishing, hunting, collecting, getting acquainted with birds and animals and plants, without thought that he was possibly even then laying the cornerstone for his future career.

He remained in Sandwich until he was 19, graduating from the High school there. He then went to Boston, where he took a course in bookkeeping at a commercial college, afterward entering commercial life as cashier and assistant book-keeper in a large shoe store. But the ways of commerce were not his ways and after two years of struggle to adapt himself to a life that was utterly distasteful he suddenly found himself and realized that there was but one field open to him in which he could be happy in his work—the field of letters. He had to be a writer, if it was no more than as a newspaper reporter.

Throwing up his position in Boston, he went to Springfield, Mass., to take a job as

office boy in the editorial rooms of the Phelps Publishing company, for the sake of getting a start in the business in which he felt that he could make a success, and there, as he expresses it, "enjoyed even the drudgery of sharpening pencils and dusting the chairs of real live editors." He remained with this and the allied Orange Judd company for more than fifteen years, becoming household and literary editor of the Orange Judd publications and one of the editors of *Good Housekeeping Magazine*.

During this time he never lost his interest in outdoor life, spending all his spare time afield or afloat and in the study of wild life. Under the name of W. B.

Thornton he became a frequent contributor to leading magazines on nature and outdoor topics. He wrote much for *Good Housekeeping Magazine* and it was in this that he first won recognition as a story teller for little children.

A little more than two years ago he gave up editorial work to devote all the time of his pen to the entertainment and instruction of children. Through the medium of his books and contributions to leading magazines, and particularly through his *Bedtime Stories*, which have become a daily feature in many evening papers of the United States and Canada, he has endeared to thousands of children the little animal characters which he has created—Billy Mink, Johnny Chuck, Joe Otter, Jerry Muskrat, Danny Meadow Mouse, Unc' Billy Possum and many more.

Mr. Burgess is married, and Mrs. Burgess is the critic to whom all stories are submitted before they are sent forth to their fate. They have three children, for the youngest of whom the little animal stories were first written. Mr. Burgess is a firm believer in the educational value of the story, and in all his work it has been his endeavor to teach, without making the effort apparent, the habits and characteristics of the animals of which he writes, and it is to this educational feature that he lays most of the success of his stories.

His first three books, "Old Mother West Wind," "Mother West Wind's Children," and "Mother West Wind's Animal Friends," have been adopted for supplementary reading in the lower grades of the public schools, and individual stories have been selected for use in textbooks. He has received many letters from school teachers, as has the *World-Herald*, saying that they are using the *Bedtime Stories* clipped from the newspapers in their school work. The fourth and last of the Mother West Wind series will be published this fall under the title "Mother West Wind's Neighbors."

At the same time will appear two volumes in a new series to be known as "The *Bedtime Story Books*." These will be collections of the *Bedtime Stories* and the titles will be "The Adventures of Reddy Fox," and "The Adventures of Johnny Chuck." Two more are announced for the spring. Mr. Burgess is also the author of books for boys. "The Boy Scouts of Woodcraft Camp," published last fall, and "The Boy Scouts on Swift River," which will appear early this fall. The first has proven a pronounced success, and both books have the hearty approval of the Boy Scout leaders.

***Kansas City Star*, September 13, 1913, page 12**

THE NEWS OF THE NEW BOOKS

There is where *The Star* is at last able to out a piece of news that has been asked and asked again. So many, many readers have wanted to know whether or not the

“Bedtime Stories” would be printed in book form. Well, they have been, some of them, at least. Two volumes of these popular little tales by Thornton W. Burgess have just come from the presses of Little, Brown & Co. One of these books is called “The Adventures of Reddy Fox.” Just how it happens that Reddy Fox lives with his grandmother instead of his mother is told in the first story in this book. It was told in *The Star*, too, but it was so long ago that probably some little boys and girls who have forgotten. The rest of the book deals with the varied adventures of little Reddy.

Reddy also has a place, of course, in the other book which is “The Adventures of Johnny Chuck.” Johnny’s adventures and his wooing of little Polly Chuck are retold.

It is modestly stated on the cover that the stories are “For boys and girls from 6 to 11,” but Mr. Burgess’s tales have many readers among boys and girls of a larger growth.

The books, which are well illustrated by Harrison Cady, sell for 50 cents each.

Buffalo Sunday Morning News, September 21, 1913, page 44

1. The Adventures of Johnny Chuck

The Bedtime Stories that have been running in the NEWS and will continue to be printed in this paper by Thornton W. Burgess, have been to some extent put into book form. Mr. Burgess is an unrivaled animal story teller of the day. If it were not so his books would not appear. But he has taken the pains in “The Adventures of Johnny Chuck” to have the stories just about long enough for reading to the children at bed time and their popularity is so great that very little eulogy need be written of them. The readers of the Burgess stories will remember that Johnny Chuck was one of the finest of Mother West Wind’s animal friends, quick tempered and greedy and liked to have his own way and yet drawn so as to make one who is familiar with the Chuck family realize that his actual habits have been embodied in the form of these stories in a way that lends the stories a perpetual charm. It is no wonder that the children are eager for them.

2. The Adventures of Reddy Fox

Another collection of the Burgess Bedtime Story books appears under the title of “The Adventures of Reddy Fox.” Reddy, it will be remembered, was the very smart little fox who was quick to learn whatever his grandmother taught him until he thought he knew it all and then he got into all kinds of trouble when his head was swelled, but he had the conceit taken out of him by an experience that made him after all still a wiser little fox than ever, and many of the things that little Reddy learned are things that we may all consider and take to heart. There is plenty of fun and frolic and all that in the Burgess books and the NEWS is glad to be able to tell its host of readers that Mr. Burgess is collecting in book form the stories that he writes. The illustrations are of the best sort, well drawn, saturated with humor and altogether good. The Burgess Bedtime Story books are published by Little, Brown & Co. Price 50 cents each.

Omaha World-Herald, October 11, 1913, page 7

THE BEDTIME STORIES IN BOOK FORM.

World-Herald readers—little boys and girls and their mamas—will be delighted to know that the Bedtime Stories which appear in this newspaper every evening have been put in book form and can now be purchased in neatly bound volumes. The publishers, Little, Brown & Co., Boston, have just issued “The Adventures of Reddy Fox” and the “Adventures of Johnny Chuck” in identical binding, and it is presumed, and hoped, that there will soon be other volumes of the “Adventures” of the little animal friends of which Mr. Thornton W. Burgess writes so well and entertainingly. No review of these little books are necessary for the edification of the *World-Herald* children. They know the stories better than the editor can ever know them. Long ago they made friends with Johnny Chuck and Reddy Fox and Sammy Jay and Peter Rabbit and the other animals of which Mr. Burgess writes. But something of the writer himself may be of interest to the grown-ups.

First, Mr. Burgess lives in Springfield, Mass., he is married and has three children of his own. He was born and “haised” over on Cape Cod and his boyhood days were spent in the woods and on the meadows and in the salt marshes. His spare time was passed in the open, fishing, hunting and getting acquainted with the birds and animals of eastern Massachusetts. It is from the fund of knowledge gained by him in those days and years that he draws on when he writes a “Bedtime” story. For a number of years Mr Burgess has been engaged in literary work, but only a short time ago—two or three years—did he give up editorial labors to devote his entire attention to the entertainment of children. It came about in this way. Mr. Burgess’ youngest child went visiting one summer—went to see his two little cousins. The first night of his absence, Mr. Burgess wrote him a letter. But instead of being the ordinary letter of a fond parent, he wrote his little boy, telling of the adventures of Reddy Fox and certain of his wood friends. The next night he wrote another story. And the third night yet another one.

At the other end of the line, the little boy was wild over the story his “daddy” had written for him. It was read to the little cousins, and they, too, went wild over it. They told the neighborhood children and soon, every day, all the children around there came in to hear the latest one. In that audience were the children of a well known editor. He heard of the wonderful stories and went himself to hear one. As a result, Burgess soon was writing one of these adventures every day and now the demand for them has become so great that Little, Brown & Co. have put them in book form.

Omaha World-Herald, November 13, 1913, page 8

THE CHILDREN’S STORY.

In little more than a year Thornton W. Burgess, with his “Bedtime Story,” has established himself as a standard entertainer in thousands of homes all over this country. No special feature ever printed in a Nebraska newspaper has met with the welcome and the constant attention that this department in the *World-Herald* has attracted. The entertainment in this story has not been confined to children, for thousands of grownups have become steady readers of the animal stories written by this talented author.

Recently the *World-Herald* has had many letters about this feature and in many

schools in Omaha and Nebraska it has been used by teachers as a daily reading. In the town of Ceresco, Neb., it is related the story has been read in school daily for a year. This report of its use in the schools and the general indorsement the story is constantly receiving leads the *World-Herald* to suggest to school teachers generally that they do not overlook this opportunity for clean, profitable and entertaining reading in the school room in several of the lower grades. Its literary quality is very high and at the same time its simplicity makes it available for all.

Omaha World-Herald, November 21, 1913, page 5

World-Herald Question Box: Kindly let me know the names of the bedtime story books written by Thornton W. Burgess now on the market, where they may be obtained and the price of each book.—Reader.

The World-Herald has made arrangements for a supply of these books and they will be here shortly. The price is not yet determined, but the edition will be advertised by the *World-Herald* as soon as received.

Springfield Republican, December 11, 1913, page 5

DOINGS OF FOREST CHILDREN

FASCINATING TALES OF "MOTHER WEST WIND" AND OF "JOHNNY CHUCK" AND "REDDY FOX"

As a teller of Nature stories, which, though primarily intended for little folk, have a peculiar fascination for older folks as well, Thornton W. Burgess of Springfield has achieved a quite unusual place. In the special field of the "Boy Scout" story for growing lads he has done excellently in combining exciting adventures with lessons of woodcraft and manliness. But he has done even better in his fanciful little stories of the creatures of forest, field and stream, whom he has made into living and talking personages. Some time ago he began a series of small volumes concerning "Mother West Wind," and the fourth in this series; "Mother West Wind's Neighbors" (Little, Brown & Co; \$1), has lately appeared. Almost simultaneously there have also appeared with the imprint of the same publishers the first two of a still smaller series, called the "Bedtime Stories" (50 cents each) and these first two are entitled "The Adventures of Johnny Chuck" and "The Adventures of Reddy Fox."

Here, we have a veracious and captivating chronicle of the daily events in the lives of such important citizens, in addition to those named in the titles, as "Happy Jack Squirrel," "Jimmy Skunk," "Peter Rabbit," "Unc' Billy Possum," "Sammy Jay," "Mistah Turkey Buzzard" and a score of others. If one should be asked offhand how so many different tales could be invented the answer would probably be that only a very fertile imagination could think up so many exploits for these wild folk to perform in getting their daily food or in eluding Farmer Brown's boy and his dog Towser (sic). But on reading them through each story seems after all so convincing a part of the daily life of the "Green Forest" and the "Green Meadow" that one will readily substitute for a fertile imagination, as the first requirement a thorough and studious knowledge of these beasts and their ways. For while Mr Burgess takes the license of making his animals talk, much as Joel Chandler Harris,—and talk they should for the ecstatic delight of very little folk,—he

nevertheless holds close to the facts of Nature in all essential portions of his brief stories or anecdotes. The result is delightful.

***Oklahoma City Times*, December 20, 1913 page 6**

[Has a]rranged to have bedtime story books available as premiums to subscribers. 3 dollars gets you the *Times* for a year and both copies.

***Los Angeles Times*, December 21, 1913 page 49**

It would seem that Thornton W. Burgess, with his animal stories, is earning the title of successor to "Uncle Remus." His "Old Mother West Wind" series—Little, Brown & Co.—have gone from two to ten printings. Of his new series of "Bedtime Story Books," large first editions of "The Adventures of Reddy Fox," and "The Adventures of Johnny Chuck" have been exhausted, and the books are about to be sent to press for another printing.

***The (Shreveport LA) Times*, December 30, 1913, page 7**

"BEDTIME STORIES" IN SCHOOL.

It is easy to imagine that when young, Prof. Rae H. Kiteley, superintendent of the Longmont schools was a boy's boy. It is still easier to believe that he has retained through the years those good traits that make man, when at his very best, a grown-up boy. Prof. Kiteley has recommended for daily reading to primary pupils in schools under his supervision the "Little Bedtime Stories." The teachers of Longmont are now complying with the request and the younger children are being entertained and instructed at the same time.

Thornton W. Burgess, the author of the Bedtime series, has a reputation wherever English books are sold or read because of his vast ability at turning animal stories into uplifting tales for children. By the simplest, truest of word pictures he brings the field, the forest and stream into the home circle, building up in the hearts of boys and girls a healthy, wholesome regard for the outdoors and a love for the smallest of God's creatures. He introduces his furry or feathered characters in a way that makes friends for them at a very fireside. Paddy the Beaver, saucy Sammy Jay, Spotty the Turtle, Reddy Fox. Unc' Billy Possum and scores of others are all known to and loved by the children. And Farmer Brown's Boy, feared though he be, is not a bad sort, after all.

The stories are well and quickly told, innocent always and instructive to the last word. Through them runs a thread of human interest which appeals to the old as well as the young. Children are better from hearing them, and grownups are improved by reading them.

It would seem that Prof. Kiteley has started something. Many kindergarten and primary teachers have of their own accord long been doing just what he recommends. But the idea might well be made general. Those Bedtime stories offer excellent method of starting young minds on the day's schoolwork.—Denver Times⁵.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

5 This story was widely circulated among newspapers.

***Vancouver Daily World*, January 4, 1913, page 1.**

RAYMOND MISSES THE "BEDTIME STORIES"

Seven-Year-Old Boy Writes to the World Complaining of Omission.

In a letter which is incontestably of his own writing, and remarkably good writing at that, Raymond Thompson, of Sunnyside, tells his troubles as follows:

"To the Editor of the Home Magazine.

"I am a little boy only seven years old. My papa and mamma read the Bedtime stories. But sometimes you do not write any.

"I feel bad when you forget to write them.

"I wish you would write one every night because I do not like to wait.

"From one of your little folks,

"Raymond Thompson."

[Editor responds] Well, Raymond, it is not the editor's fault. He does not write the "Bedtime Stories" himself. He could not, if he tried. Now, Mr. Burgess does not live in Vancouver, and his stories are sent to the editor by post. For several days none have arrived, and the editor has been very unhappy about it, knowing that many, many little Raymonds and Ediths and Bernards and Mamies all over Vancouver go to bed disappointed when there is no "Bedtime Stories" in *The World*. The editor is afraid Mr. Burgess is ill. Perhaps his New Year's day dinner did not agree with him. The editor hopes that whatever is the matter with poor Mr. Burgess he will be better soon and that his stories will again appear every evening⁶.

***Los Angeles Evening Express*, January 20, 1913, page 6.**

"BEDTIME STORIES" TRUE TO NATURE

Young and old readers of *The Express* are delighted with the "Bedtime Stories," published daily in these columns, descriptive of the doings of the little denizens of fields and woods. Numbers of young people have written to the editor, acknowledging their pleasure. But we have a letter now from a young-old gentleman, who says:

"Thornton W. Burgess, Los Angeles Express.

"Dear Sir:—I first saw the light at the foot of the Alleghanies in "Old Virginny" 70 years ago, and grew to manhood there. During boyhood and youth I loved to observe very carefully the habits of each of the dear little wild animals you so very correctly and entertainingly describe in your series of evening stories in *The Express*.

"I have followed your descriptions minutely and found them true to nature in every detail, and I surely wish that every one of your young readers could know, as I do, the accuracy of your beautiful descriptions of these little dwellers of field and forest.

"Hoping you may follow on this narrow path, through the briar-patch of literature, I am, as ever, the little animal and children's friend,

A.G. Scott, 730 West Ninth street, Los Angeles.

6 During January there was an unusual amount of confusion among newspapers about intended dates of publication and sequencing of stories, possibly due to problems with the mail.

***Toronto Star*, February 5, 1913, page 17**

THORNTON W. BURGESS' WORKS.

Editor of *The Star*: ... (2) Is there a book written by Thornton W. Burgess, who writes the "Bedtime Stories" in the *Daily Star*?

American

Answer: ... (2) He is the author of "The Bride's Primer" (1905), "Old Mother West Wind" (1910), "Mother West Wind's Children (1911). His address is 61 Washington road, Springfield, Mass. Don't know the prices of the books. You can order them through any bookseller.

***Vancouver Daily World*, February 13, 1913, page 6**

LIKES LITTLE STORIES FOR BEDTIME

All the way from Wanstead Park Road, London, England, comes a letter signed, "Your little friend, Gladys May Curry," in which Gladys May writes as follows: "I am writing to let you know how very much I like the Little Stories for Bedtime in your paper, and I hope Mr. Burgess will tell us a great deal about the funny habits of Peter Rabbit, Granny Fox and Mrs. Grouse. My Dadda sends them to me, and I thought you ought to know that little English girls like them very much. With best wishes for the New Year."

Now, the editor thinks it is very nice of Gladys May to write like this. He hopes she will be as glad as May and as blooming as June all through the year, and for many more years to come.

***Chicago Daily News*, March 18, 1913 page 9**

THE BEDTIME STORIES

We have been constant readers of *The Daily News* for years and do not get Monday's edition till Tuesday's train comes. I have two girlies, 4 and 7, and as soon as the paper comes they say: "Mamma, read us about Unc' Billy Possum!" Mamma is too busy just then, but when she does read it even the 12 and 14 and 16 year old boys are interested listeners. Success to Mr. Burgess and may we have more of these stories.

A Mother of Six. Genoa Junction, Wis.

***Kansas City Star*, March 30, 1913 page 10**

PETER RABBIT INTO HOSPITAL WARDS

Norman, Ok.—To The Star: I am director of a little girls' club here and for sometime past we have been clipping Thornton Burgess's "Little Bedtime Stories" from *The Star*. We will mount each one separately on a piece of cardboard and in this light and easily handled form send them to hospitals and other institutions for children.

Mrs. W. C. Smith

***Toronto Star*, April 3, 1913**

"BEST CHILDREN'S STORIES I'VE READ"

Spencerville, Ont.

Editor of The Star:

We have been much pleased with your "Household Topics for Every Member of the Family." "Little Stories for Bedtime" are the best children's stories I have ever read.

Reader

Montreal Star, April 16, 1913

THE CHILDREN AND THE BEDTIME STORIES

A couple of days last week the *Star* was unfortunately compelled to omit some of its magazine features, including Thornton W. Burgess' "Little Stories for Bedtime." The result has been a storm of protesting and pleading letters from all over the city and from every province in Canada. It is, of course, impossible to publish them all, but the following, from Bristol, N.B., is typical:—

Bristol Car Co., N.B., April 3rd, 1913.

Editor "*Daily Star*."

A little boy of seven years, who has eagerly awaited the "bedtime" story each day, appeals that these stories may be continued. For three days his disappointment has been very keen as he eagerly scanned the pages seeking "Johnny Chuck" and his companions.

These little stories interest not only the boy, but the father and mother, and even the grandmother. So, Dear Editor, please do not let them be crowded out, and when the series is finished begin all over again. They are well worth it.

Yours sincerely,

Donald and his Mother

Accidents will happen even in newspapers, but as far as possible, *The Star* will endeavor not to disappoint Donald again.

Kansas City Star, May 7, 1913.

To The Star: I see we have a new little girl to head, "The Bed Time Stories." I wonder why? Surely they did not think, down at *The Star* office that we were tired of our little girl. Why, we had grown to be such friends, over our nightly reading of the adventures of Peter Rabbit and Johnny Chuck and all the rest of the little folk of the Green Forest and Green Meadows, that I miss her more than I can say. Please Mr. Editor, or Mr. Burgess (if you have taken our little girl away), can't we have her back?

48 YEARS YOUNG

The Editor replies:

The appeal of "48-Years-Young," seconded as it was by many others, already has been complied with. The little girl who so long presided over the Bed Time Stories has been restored to her place

Chicago Daily News, May 8, 1913, page 9

FOR KINDNESS TO ANIMALS

... I disapprove of Mr. Mason's cruel and heartless remarks (as do many others) because of their baneful influence. My critic avers that Mr. Mason's "gay"

stories have many friends. Yes! So have the cock fights and bull fights. Lincoln, Gladstone, Huxley and dozens I might name could never look upon suffering unmoved; and they never considered it beneath their dignity to aid or relieve the lowliest creature that was in pain.

And now a word of praise ... for Thornton Burgess' "Bedtime Stories," enjoyed by the grownups as well as by the children. They fairly radiate that spirit of kindness to all living things.

J. H. Langs, Chicago.

Kansas City Times, May 8, 1913

To *The Star*: I like to read the Bedtime Stories. I want to know where Farmer Brown lives, so I can go and see "Uncle Billy" Possum and Johnny Chuck's lost baby. I believe they must be cute. Aunt Alice says she will take me to see them, if it's not too far away. Please let me know soon for I am fond of all kinds of pets.

MINNIE L. THOMAS, Garnett, Kas.

Houston Chronicle, May 11, 1913

THOSE BEDTIME STORIES

To the Editor of the Chronicle.

Your little "Stories for Bedtime" form the base of a story without which no evening would be complete for my little 6-year-old Leta and her brother, aged 12. They ask me to tell you to please not let harm come to Uncle Billy 'Possum. To them he seems to be in a very dangerous place, and if you could see their eyes and know how much they wished him to escape you would not blame me for describing just how he will dig out and return Mrs. Chuck's lost boy to her before you conclude the story.

Peter Rabbit and Johnny Chuck are the best liked by them of all your little "wood folk."

The moral tone of your stories will cause children to love and protect our fast disappearing "wood folk." You let Billy 'Possum steal eggs without incurring their displeasure, and not for once do they think of classing him as a rogue. Yours very truly,

W. E. McKay. Huntsville, Texas.

Los Angeles Evening Express, May 12, 1913

"BEDTIME STORIES" IDEA

Grandpa makes for me "Bedtime Stories" scrap books of good book paper with covers of colored window shade material fastened with colored wrapping cord. He leaves blank spaces on each page for illustrating, which I am doing with colored pencils and crayons.

—Marjorie, Hazard, Coquille, Ore.

Los Angeles Evening Express, May 15, 1913

GIFT FOR CHILD

I cut out the "Bedtime Stories" from *The Express* and pasted them on pieces of cardboard that come in laundered shirts. Cut the cardboard in half, as it is more

convenient to handle. Then I cut two round holes in the back edge of all and tied them together with narrow blue ribbon, and pasted the heading, "Bedtime Stories," across the top of the front cover and made a very pretty story book for my little girl, a birthday present.

—Mrs. R. L. Luce

Kansas City Star, May 17, 1913

To The Star: I am a little boy 7 years old. I have been reading the Bedtime Stories for a long time, but I can't see why Farmer Brown's boy gathers his eggs in the morning. If he would gather his eggs in the evening, as most people do, I think Uncle Billy Possum and the rest of the little meadow people would not have such a feast.

ROLLIE BORGSTADT, ALMA, MO.

Kansas City Star, May 24, 1913

Thornton Burgess, care *The Star*:

You may be interested to know that one of the delighted, wide-eyed hearers of your "Bedtime Stories" has offered a novel explanation of the trouble with the "Smiling Pool." Its value lies in the fact that it came from a boy who is only 2 1/2 years old, and who apparently misses many of the best points in your stories.

Last night he asked me what was the matter at the "Smiling Pool," and I replied that I thought the water had run out of it. In a minute he said: "Tork tame out of it." (The cork came out of it.) A little later when I repeated his remark to his mother he made this assertion: "I fink Peter Wabbit took da tork out and wun 'way wif it." Being the father of this small boy and having to read these stories to him every day immediately upon the arrival of the paper, I believe he is right in pointing the finger of suspicion at "Peter Rabbit."

Yours very truly, PROUD FATHER

Kansas City Star, May 27, 1913

Dear Star: I have been for some time very much interested in the doings of the little wood-folk in the Green Forest and around the Smiling Pool. Forty or more years ago I could have seen Farmer Brown's boy any day, by looking in a looking glass.

My three boys are grown up and gone, but the little stories come before Europe's war news, or even the Bull Moose happenings, so dear to us. Yes, I might even say they compete in interest with the narrative of the standpatters coming to the mourning bench.

56 YEARS YOUNG, Vinita OK

Sunday World-Herald, June 8, 1913 page 39

THEIR PET CHICKENS

Omaha—Dear Uncle Ross: I like to read the stories on the children's page and the "Bedtime Stories" very much and I thought I would like to write a letter. We have some chickens and get five or six eggs a day...

Yours truly, Irene Kuhn.

Los Angeles Evening Express, June 18, 1913, page 15

PLEASES THE YOUNGSTERS

This is a Christmas hint for children: I am cutting out all the Bedtime stories from *The Express* and I will arrange them in sets; rabbit stories by themselves and possum and so on. Then I will make a book out of some nice paper and tie it with ribbon, and it will make a fairy tale book that children will all like.

As soon as our *Express* comes at night several little children come to read the Bedtime stories and they read the old papers over and over.

—Mrs. E. Wackerle, Long Beach.

Chicago Daily News, June 24, 1913, page 11

“CHUG-A-RUM!”

Three generations have enjoyed the “Bedtime Stories” for the little folks printed in *The Daily News*.

The moral set by hopeful Unc’ Billy Possum and the sound sense of Grandfather Frog will be recognized by many a child; for children’s minds catch the keynote of a situation in a story, but are slower to comprehend it in their own disappointment. Did Unc’ Billy or Grand’ther Frog have tantrums or mope or sulk? No! not they! They had too much sense. They hoped and thought and worked and thus got out of their trouble.

These stories of the green forest act like a tonic on the little cooped up flat dwellers of our great city’s population; for those sealed little souls crave something more than portable toys and are constantly reaching out mentally for the Creator’s world of nature—that space and its people beyond their windows and porches, and farther still—beyond the horizon line on the far away sky.

I well remember a little boy’s tearful hopeless exclamation seventeen years ago, when he said in utter collapse: “I have the worstest luck of anybody in the whole world!” But so had Unc’ Possum when his thoughtless pranks—and worse, his bad behavior—got him “treed” by an enemy; and who would have thought of such help as came to save him and let him get home in safety—those little snowflakes dropping down from the high sky to cover his tracks in forgiveness of his first sin! H.H.H. Chicago.

Los Angeles Evening Express, June 26, 1913 page 15

STORIES PASTED ON LINEN

I am compiling a book, pasted on linen, of your bedtime stories, which interest my little nephew intensely. He finds in them companions for “Uncle Remus” children, and thinks that “Susan Cottontail,” who ran away to California, made Peter Rabbit change his name. The Laughing Brook, Smiling Pool, Green Forest and Meadows are all peopled with creatures of his imagination.

—F.T.

Montreal Star, June 30, 1913

LITTLE JOE OTTER LANDS A GREAT BIG FISH FOR THE CHILDREN

Scarcely a mail comes into *The Star* nowadays without some tribute to the

attraction, for young and old, of Thornton W. Burgess “Little Stories for Bedtime.” Saturday brought something unusual—a magnificent Restigouche River salmon, with the following letter:

Chamberlain Shoals Camp, Restigouche River, P.Q..

T. W. Burgess, Esq., *Star* Office:

June 27th, 1913.

My Dear Sir, I am sending you a 25 lb. salmon which I killed this morning. I am sending the fish as a tribute to you as an artist, “Little Stories for Bedtime.” I have been following those stories, and you have a better knowledge of the animals you have in your stories and write about, than three-quarters of the writers on natural history. I may say that for thirty-three years I have been one of the lessees of five miles of salmon water on the Restigouche River, Quebec side, and during that time I have spent from four to eight week ends each year, and that we have all the animals which you mention except the wolf. For instance, we have the porcupine, and how few know the terror he inspires in a dog who probably has had quills extracted from his nose with pinchers. The fish I am sending you was a game one and put up a great fight, and I hope it will reach you in good order. Please let me hear how he comes to hand. I remain, Yours truly.

Restigouche Club, Matapedia, Que.

J. H. STEARNS.

As Mr. Burgess is out of the city, the big fish was sent to the Children’s Memorial Hospital, where scores of children to-day gave happy thanks to Mr. Stearns and blessed Mr. Burgess and his Little Stories of the Green Meadows and the Laughing Brook⁷.

Kansas City Star, July 31, 1913

To the *Star*: My little brother and I have read the bedtime stories for a long time and have not missed a one of them unless we could not help it and now we just got through reading about the man who writes the bedtime stories, Thornton W. Burgess. We saw his picture in *The Star* ⁸when he was writing a bedtime story. I am 11 years old and my brother James is 6. Almost every day we see most all of the little forest and meadow folks, but they do not know when we are watching them that every time we get *The Star* we are so anxious to read about them. We think the writer is so sweet faced and kind looking. We are so glad that the little blue eyed boy left his daddy and that Mother West Wind slipped in at our bedtime story man’s window and told him about the bed time stories. We are also glad that *The Star* was kind enough to publish them.

Omaha World-Herald, August 29, 1913, page 6

OLDER ONES ENJOY BEDTIME STORIES.

Fairfield, Neb.. Aug. 23.—To the Editor of the World-Herald. As I read that interesting article from the pen of Thornton W. Burgess on page six of Tuesday’s issue, I wondered if Mr. Burgess realizes how many grown-ups are interested in his

7 This story was widely circulated among newspapers.

8 See above in Promotions section, July 25.

“Little Stories for Bedtime.”

How many are there whose hair is silvered o’er who like to forget their business cares for a while and go with Mr. Burgess to the Green Forest, the Shining Pool, the Big Pasture and the Old Briar Patch?

And Peter Rabbit, why we can almost see him dodge into that old briar patch with Rover at his very heels. Then we can hear Rover’s sharp “yow, yow,” as he leaps high into the air or runs hurriedly around to the other side to see if Peter had not passed on through.

There’s Sammy Jay and Drummer the Woodpecker. Were they not old companions of ours when we sat upon the bank of the old creek fishing for bull-heads?

Is it any wonder, that the “Little Folks of the Green Forest” were frightened when Old Man Coyote let out that blood-curdling howl of his? When we were driving the cows home from the pasture just after dusk, didn’t we hurry them a little faster if Old Man Coyote happened to give one of his “yip, yip, vip yeows?”

Sammy Jay still screams down by the old fishing hole.

Drummer the Woodpecker still hammers away on the old dead cottonwood.

Old Man Coyote howls down by the pasture.

Peter Rabbit is the same Peter as when we used to track him through the newly fallen snow or smoke him out of the hollow log.

But we haven’t the time to fish for bullheads; some other boy drives the cows home; a little touch of rheumatics keeps us from tracking Peter Rabbit through the snow.

No, we “old boys” don’t have any of the old-time fun now, but we may read Mr. Burgess stories and enjoy them, too.

G. H. NICHOLS.

REFERENCES TO THORNTON W. BURGESS/LITTLE STORIES FOR BED-TIME

Los Angeles Evening Express, February 3, 1913, page 6.

BURGESS GOOD, BUT LISTEN TO ANDREWS

“Uncle Jerry” Tells How Coyote Rids Himself of Troublesome Flea

Thornton W. Burgess, writer of the animal stories for children in the *Express* which have caused so much favorable comment, has a rival in the city council. “Uncle Jerry” Andrews is the candidate for nature story honors. Here is the yarn that won “Uncle Jerry” the honor of entering Burgess’ class, at least among a small group of city hall attaches.

“Well, sir, I want to tell you those Burgess stories in *The Express* are all right,” said he. “They are instructive and told in simple language, interesting the children, and teaching them some real facts about animal life. But I can tell you one that Burgess never heard of, but is true, nevertheless.

“Did you ever hear how the coyotes get rid of fleas?...”

Chattanooga Daily Times, May 4, 1913

A number of our afternoon exchanges are running “Little Stories for Bedtime.” The trouble is that by the time the earnest reader gets to the little stories he is so sleepy he can’t read them.

***Kansas City Star*, June 3, 1913, page 14**

ANOTHER LITTLE STORY FOR BEDTIME

Unc’ Billy Possum was as mad as a wet hen. Yes, sir, that’s just how mad he was when he came out of the moving picture show.

“Yo’ a liah, sah!” he said, just like that, to Sammy Jay, who was taking tickets with one hand and picking pockets with the other. “Yo’ a contaminated liah; dat’s what yo’ is”

“Now, my good fellow—” suavely began Sammy Jay.

“Don’t yo’ call me yo’ good fellah, sah!” shouted Unc’ Billy. “I ain’t nobody’s good fellah; I’s a bad fellah, and I’ll bit yo’ if yo’ says I isn’t! Yo’ adve’tised to have de Lady o’ Lyons in dis yuh show, and dar ain’t nary lion on de place! Yo’ gimme back muh dime!”⁹

***Kansas City Star*, July 13, 1913, page 30**

ANOTHER LITTLE BED-TIME STORY.

Peter Rabbit was obfuscated. Yes, sir, that is exactly what Peter Rabbit was. You see, the inhabitants of the Green Forest had been greatly upset over the arrival of a terrible creature from away off some’rs, whom they at first suspected of being old man Coyote, but later discovered to be the Wolf of Wall Street. “What puzzles me,” confessed Peter Rabbit, “is why, even though he is undoubtedly a nefarious scoundrel, with lies, thefts and other villainies thick upon his head, the rest of us should be so bitter against him. Sammy Jay is the ablest liar in the world, and proud of it. The Fox family, Granny and Reddy, steal everything they can get their claws on. I, myself, have been known to girdle young apple trees with my teeth. In fact, none of us Hons. is absolutely above reproach. And yet we give this fellow Hail Columbia on all sides for behaving just about the same as we do ourselves. I wonder if it is because he makes so much noise about it and continues to fight us instead of j’inin’ us?”

***Redwood Gazette* (Minnesota), July 15, 1913, page 2**

While the *Gazette* was anxiously waiting for [The Secretary of State] to discuss grave matters of state, he calmly sat and read several (and chuckled over them too) “Little Stories for Bedtime” from last week’s [Minneapolis] *Dispatch*. However, we must agree with the Secretary of State that the doings of Father Coyote are much more interesting than any utilities commission.

***Kansas City Times*, November 20, 1913, page 14**

Thornton W. Burgess, the Bedtime Story man, who writes so entertainingly about the Merry Little Breezes,” says the *Higginsville Jeffersonian*, “probably never bucked a keen November wind while garbed in a thin last summer’s suit.

9 This parody demonstrates how close Burgess’s characters and the world of the Minstrel show could be in the public mind.

BABY CHUCK CONTROVERSY

Los Angeles Evening Express, May 13, 1913, page 14

THAT LITTLE BABY CHUCK

Editor The Express—Dear Sir, A protest has gone up from many mothers about keeping the little baby chuck, told of in Bedtime stories, a prisoner so long. We can have no peace when *The Express* arrives. It's "Mamma, here's the paper. See if the little chuck's out. Look mamma, please look!" and the little baby hands, all stuck up with dirt and candy, begin to ruthlessly tumble up my paper. Hastily, I peruse its columns, and with a heavy heart, I say: "No, darling, he isn't out yet, but sweetheart, he's asleep; don't cry, dear." "I wish they'd hurry up. He'll wake up in the night. I'm 'fraid he'll git scared." "Go to sleep, my boy, and perhaps, they'll get him out tomorrow. It's just a story chuck, anyway. Don't cry."

Another day and nervous little feet come running up the steps. "Mamma, mamma, here's another paper. See, quick, if the baby chuck's out." I look. "No darling, the chuck is not out yet, but he's got company now, he won't be lonesome, anyway. Uncle Billy Possum's in prison now!" "Why, mamma, is he in with that poor little baby chuck? He'll fight him, won't he?" "No, darling, he's in a cage of his own!" "Goody, goody, goody. I hope he'll never get out, the old greedy, lazy thing, to go and sneeze, 'stead of getting that poor little chuck out." "Hush, darling, don't cry, I'll write to the Bedtime story man and tell him he must hurry them out," and the little tear-stained face turned away, and I heard. "I wish he'd hurry up."

AUNT RUTH Los Angeles, May 12.

Los Angeles Express, May 21, 1913, page 15

BEDTIME STORIES

Why the Little Chuck Stayed with the Farmer's Boy

By the Editor of the Express

Hundreds of boy and girl readers of the Bedtime stories in *The Express* have signified their disappointment and regret at the failure of the author of these stories, Thornton W. Burgess, to rescue the willful little Chuck from the Farmer's Boy. But they should remember that Mr. Burgess is an accomplished and skillful naturalist, and while he also has a vivid imagination he tries to adhere very closely to the probabilities. So, children, let us think for a moment why Mr. Burgess permitted the little Chuck to remain, by preference, with the Farmer's Boy, instead of being rescued by even Johnnie Chuck, his father.

We must remember that all through these stories Mr. Burgess has shown that the Farmer's Boy has been the most feared of all the enemies known to the little people who live in the Green Forest. On the Boy's appearance with his gun, or with Bowser the Hound, both bent on missions of capture or destruction, everybody ran to cover, fearing they would be caught or killed. Through a long series of dramatic incidents the Boy has been shown in a bad light, a fact that should be kept in mind.

But Mr. Burgess comes now to prove that the Farmer's Boy never meant to be

vicious or wicked; that he was just a boy, doing those things which almost every boy does when he has a chance, and in many cases with good reason. Being a Farmer's boy he naturally loves animals, and when he captured the helpless little Chuck his heart was touched. You will remember that he talked kindly to it. He fed it warm milk from a bottle and gathered lettuce leaves for its dessert. He treated it with extreme kindness so that it fed from his hand and finally loved the boy in return. Are you surprised that the Chuck preferred to stay in the nice warm nest and be cuddled into peace and security?

Understand, now, that the editor of *The Express* has not conferred with Mr. Burgess as to that gentleman's "Whys and Wherefores," and doesn't pretend to know, any more than you do, what may finally happen to the little Chuck, but in the meantime it is certain that all little boys and girls have been given a better opinion of one of their own kind—the Farmer's Boy who loved the little Green Forest baby. Now isn't that right?

Los Angeles Evening Express, June 30, 1913

MR. BURGESS AND THE CHUCK STORY

Editor *The Express*—Dear Sir: There is an appeal coming to me to ask Thornton W. Burgess, the "Bedtime Story" writer, to have the little runaway chuck visit his little heart-broken mother. If the stories are to teach little boys and girls good lessons for life, then, this arrangement of the disappointing chuck story would teach respect and inbred love for parents. As it is, it teaches boys and girls they can run away from home, find strange friends they like better than mother and father, strange home ties better than old home ties, and that it is easy to forget mother and father, brothers and sisters and feel no sorrow for their sorrow. It is not natural. Please let the little chuck get homesick and go home, and let's have a reunion and make the old folks glad. Perhaps you have this already in your mind, and I should have patience. I was satisfied with the way you treated the captivity of the little chuck, and want to say these little animal stories are the finest I've ever read for children. I would so love to read of the joy of mother and father chuck when the little home-sick fellow comes limping home.

MRS. SARAH H. PAYNE, The Children's Aunt Ruth. Ocean Park, June 30.

Los Angeles Evening Express, October 23, 1913, page 14

MOTHER GRIEF AND CHILD LOVE

Editor *The Express*—Dear Sir: I hope this may reach the brain cell of Thornton Burgess and give him a painful thought of the necessity of teaching this kind of a lesson to our little ones, as that is what, I am told, he is writing these beautiful little nature stories in "Bedtime Stories" for. If the children have not noticed the lack of mother grief and child love, he should. This is the age for the lack of these close ties, especially in the children. Yours for a true state.

MRS. S. H. PAYNE

A PETITION

A pale little woodchuck mother
Sat long by her humble door:

She peered far into the twilight.
 And wept, for her heart was sore.
 She gazed toward the hazy distance
 Where sleepy birds cheeped "Good night,"
 And the dear little "Merry Breezes"
 Flirted with maids of the moonlight.
 All the little woods people
 Felt sad when they passed her door,
 And said to each other in whispers:
 "She's not the same chuck as of yore."
 Her eyes were so sunken and mournful,
 Her mouth has a pitiful droop.
 "We wish that heartless young woodchuck
 Would get a bad spell of the croup:
 'Guess then, he'd hike back a-howling
 To daddy and mammy and home.'
 Most everyone's saddened and gloomy
 Since our dear little chuck went to roam.
 "Come home!" cries the poor weeping mother,
 My poor little 'Prodigal Son':
 The 'Smiling Pool' and the dear 'Laughing Brook'
 Sigh sadly when each day is done;
 Sigh because of your absence, dear,
 And because of your mother's sad heart;
 Why all your friends in the forest, dear,
 Grieve o'er this act on your part.
 Come home, we'll give you a concert,
 Gay "Mistah Mocker" said so.
 The goodies we've saved are spoiling, dear—
 Oh, darling, pray, why did you go?
 The "Merry Breezes" will give you a dance,
 I, a feast, a ring, yea, the whole
 That goes to show the joy of us all,
 Who'll toast you from "Nature's Fair Bowl."
 "Tisn't fair to her, dear little Woodchuck,
 To stay from her bosom so long:
 You're setting a sinful example.
 The children all think it is wrong:
 Come home before It's too late, dear;
 Come home, be it morning or noon;
 If you don't her heart will be broken,
 It will, if you don't come soon.
 —ALL THE LITTLE FOREST PEOPLE.

SHALL ANIMALS WEAR CLOTHES OR NOT?

Evening World-Herald , October 28, 1913 page 15

[note after the day's story, repeated on October 29]

(Shall the animals in the Bedtime Stories wear clothes or not? The artist is in doubt. If the readers have any views on the subject write Bedtime Story editor, *World-Herald*.—Ed. Note.)

Vancouver Daily World, October 29, 1913 page 6

One of the most popular of *The World's* popular features is the "Little Stories for Bedtime." It appears that some objections have been made to the publishers of the series, on the ground that clothes have been put upon the animals as they appear in the illustrations. Have readers of *The World* any opinions on the question?

Evening World-Herald, October 30, 1913 page 9

To Our Readers

Through an error the Bedtime Story was omitted Wednesday evening and Thursday morning. So there are two in this issue.

Do you want the animals to wear clothes or not? The artist is in doubt. At first the characters in the Bedtime story appeared just as they do in the woods and wilds, and then the artists put on caps and trousers. Do you want the animals to wear clothes?

Write the Bedtime Story editor your opinion. —Ed. Note

Los Angeles Evening Express, November 11, 1913 page 15

LISTEN, CHILDREN!

To the thousands of children of Southern California who read or listen to the reading of the Bedtime Stories in *The Express*: A number of objections have been raised because the animals pictured in these stories wear clothes, and *The Express* wants to know how you feel about it.

The pictures are made by Harrison Cady, one of the best animal illustrators in the United States, and Mr. Cady does not know whether he should continue to clothe his illustrations or to present them to youthful readers of *The Express* in the furry or cuticle garb which nature has given them. *The Express* wants to know what you think, as the pictures and stories are given for your entertainment. Give your opinions in letters not to exceed 200 words each and send them to *The Express*. It will be in the nature of a vote, and the majority will rule. Address letters: Bedtime Story, The Express. [repeated on subsequent days]

Los Angeles Evening Express, November 12, 1913 page 6

NATURE'S CLOTHING ON ANIMALS IS ENDORSED

Readers of Bedtime Stories who prefer to see clothing on the little animals illustrating the tales of the woods and fields are not having things all their own way, although they are more numerous than those who want to see the animals unclothed. Three letters containing protests against the clothing were received today.

T. J. Morris, who said he read the request for votes on the question to his 6-year-old son, writes:

My young son follows the Bedtime Stories closely and he answered without hesitation. He liked the pictures best when animals looked natural and were not dressed up. I am of the same opinion.

Likes Them Natural

Ruth Henderson of Redondo Beach also objects to the clothing. She says: I am a girl of 12 years. I think that the forest people of the Green Meadows look more natural without clothing. I live out in the country part of Redondo Beach, so I see many of these queer animals. I like to read the Bedtime Stories and I always read the story the first thing. I think animals look better with their own fur than clothes. Tell the author I am very interested in the Bedtime Stories.

A strong protest against the clothing of animals is made by Mrs. S. H. Payne of Ocean Park, who subscribes herself "The Children's Aunt Ruth." She writes:

Says Keep Nature True

I thought Mr. Thornton Burgess was writing these stories to get our children acquainted with nature's animals. If so, then let us not cater to untrained taste which so easily runs to the unnatural and artificial in a child's mind, but get it acquainted with true nature, whether the child wants it or not. These stories are written especially for the child, not for the adult who, perhaps, has been doped for years on artificial reading and other things as well; so it need make no difference what the adults think of it. I speak for the children.

Back to nature and keep there—pure, clean, wholesome nature, of course. The little forest people are not in September morn clothes. They are in the beautiful furry and feathery garments God put on them, and He said they were good. We have enough of the tiresome, foolish clothes among people. For heaven's sake, let us have a rest among the animals. Like I've said so many times about the little runaway chuck: "Come home, little people; dress in God's clothes you were dressed in when we first began to read about you in the dear old *Express*. To stay at home is best."

Own Clothes Beautiful

Please let well enough alone for the children's sake. The idea of putting our kind of clothes, however beautiful they may be—and I must compliment the artist on his artistic taste and ability—on top of the beautiful clothes nature made for them! Men and women are not clothed by nature, therefore Eve made garments of leaves and Cain of animal skins. How would the artist like to go about turning things around for stories of children. Turn about, you know, is fair play. "Consistency, thou art a jewel."

Here are just a few from the other side. Gladys Thorne of 3832 Maple avenue writes:

I like the animals we are reading about in the Bedtime Stories as they are, with clothes on.

Donald and Harold Barnes, aged 11 and 10 years, respectively, say:

We are readers of your stories and enjoy them very much for having the animals

dressed in funny clothes.”

Charles Fueller of Whittier has this to say:

I am in favor of keeping clothes on the little meadow and forest people. The swallowtail coat and stovepipe hat of Grandfather Frog and Reddy Fox with his pants and shirt look so cute.

Omaha World-Herald, November 13, 1913, page 6

READERS ARE DIVIDED ON BEDTIME STORY FOLKS

ARDENT CHAMPIONS WANT ANIMALS DRESSED AND AS MANY THE OTHER WAY.

ARTIST WHO ILLUSTRATES MR. BURGESS’ FASCINATING STORY MUST DECIDE IT.

Sometime ago the World-Herald asked its readers of The Bedtime Story to send in their opinions as to whether the animals in that absorbing feature should be dressed in clothes or not. Every mail since then has brought answers and the total indicates that there is just about an even division of opinion, so the artist will continue to use his judgment on this question. The most votes from any one city or locality were from Ceresco, Neb., where for a year the *World-Herald* Bedtime Story has been a feature in school. Twenty little readers from there sent in their views and they were divided. A very few of the letters are appended below. One little tot sent in her opinion printed in large letters, as follows:

“Dear Editor: I thank you for The Bedtime Stories. I would rather have the frogs without clothes. “GRETCHEN DISHONG.”

Scrap Book Used.

Another is from a grandmother:

“Dear Editor: “My grandchildren and I have greatly enjoyed The Bedtime Stories. They suggested the making of a scrap book which has also furnished amusement. When the animals came out in cap and gown, I felt that took the stories out of the real nature studies and did not so well speak of real life in the open. Respectfully, “MRS W. H. RUSSELL, 309 North Thirty-Third Street.”

Here is the reply to the previous letter:

“Herman, Neb., Oct. 29.—Editor Bedtime Stories: I think the animals are more comical if they are dressed. Your little reader, Age 9. “CLARE JOHNSON.”

A positive opinion comes from West Point:

West Point, Neb., Nov. 1.—Dear World-Herald: I saw in a recent issue that the was in artist of the animal stories doubt as to whether the animals and birds should wear clothes or not. They shouldn’t. It isn’t natural. In our family, we all love the animal stories and even the pictures gave us pleasure until unnatural clothing was given them. I wanted to protest long ago, but thought it would be useless, so I’m protesting now in the name of my brothers, sisters, parents and other friends. Yours sincerely, FARMER’S DAUGHTER.

Used in Schools.

From Ceresco, where the teachers use this World-Herald feature in the schools,

comes a variety of opinions. One of them, Hazel Burgland, says:

“My teacher reads The Bedtime Stories to us at school and I think them very nice. I like them best with the clothes on because you can tell them apart and they look something like people. I like the story where Chatterer, the red squirrel, gets the eggs out of Drummer’s nest, the woodpecker.”

Among other letters, nicely and neatly written, from this school, is the following:

“Editor of The Bedtime Stories: Our teacher has been reading The Bedtime Stories for nearly a year. I like the animals better undressed, because they look more natural. And they would feel better, I should think, and they look more like themselves.

“I was glad that Hooty, the owl, didn’t get Peter Rabbit that time he was going up to the Old Pasture. And was glad that little Miss Fuzzy Tail didn’t get caught. Your little friend, “BERNICE GROSS.”

Altogether the opinions stand about the ratio of 150 to 148 in favor of the artist continuing as he is in depicting the little animals in the story.

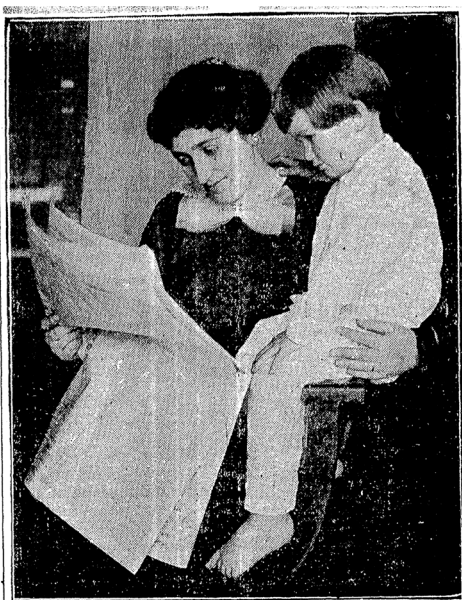
Vancouver Daily World, November 15, 1913, page 6

A few days ago we asked for an expression of opinion whether the meadow and forest folk who scuttle and leap and swim through the “Little Stories for Bedtime” should remain nude or should be clothed. The burden of opinion seems to be that the little people of the wilds should be left “as bare as birkie.” One correspondent writes thus: “Little Stories for Bedtime” used to be interesting and instructive glimpses of nature, and children understood and enjoyed them. Now they are farcical. Take off the clothes!”

Images for Appendix 1.



Thornton W. Burgess Writing a Bedtime Story. *Kansas City Star*, July 25, 1913.



At Bedtime. *Chicago Daily News*, April 26, 1913.

Appendix 2. Names and Natural History

While Johnny Chuck seems to have been Burgess's original focal character (a possibility realized in the 1973 Japanese animated version of his stories), Peter Rabbit quickly assumed that role in *Little Stories for Bedtime*, possibly because, unlike a woodchuck, a cottontail would be available as a character during the winter. On the other hand, rabbit characters, especially ones named "Peter," had proven saleability.

In his memoir, Burgess (1960) publicly addressed his debt to Beatrix Potter, but attributed the name to his son. "When I began writing stories for my own small boy, a rabbit was already Peter and there was no changing the name. (p. 120)" In other words, "Peter," in his son's mind, was as firmly attached to the animal as "Rabbit" was. It was a generic, universal name, not a specific one. When it came to book publishing, however, the possibilities of market confusion and even copyright infringement made the use of "Peter Rabbit" problematic. Thus Burgess wrote a series of stories in May in which the character briefly assumed the name "Peter Cottontail," providing a book in the planning stages with a usable title. It is worth considering how the animal community's rejection of the new name as pretentious relates to Burgess's own penchant for pen-names during his magazine career ("W. B. Thornton," "Waldo," "Arthur Chapouille" *et al*).

Far more problematic, however, was a series of stories in January in which Peter Rabbit's coat turned white. That this was a mistake that Burgess later became aware of is confirmed by the fact that in his revisions of three of the stories for *The Bedtime Story Calendar* in 1914, he attributed the coat change to Jumper the Hare and deleted the reference to Peter Rabbit. On the other hand, in two other *Calendar* stories, he did not make corrections, and it remained uncorrected in the mini-book version of "How Peter Rabbit Learned to Use His New Coat." Burgess's failure to correct the three stories, and his repeated depiction in 1913 of "Bumble the Bee" as male, suggest that he was still willing to sacrifice natural history accuracy for story and character. The Bumble case is particularly interesting, given that the sex of stinging bees is such an elementary nature fact. For a female character to be "gruff" may simply not have aligned with Burgess's somewhat conservative gender ideas.

The coat changing episode may also offer a clue into Harrison Cady's curiously insistent portrayal of Peter, throughout the feature's run, as a white rabbit, most clearly when working in color. While Cady was not yet the illustrator when those stories were published in newspapers, he did provide new full-color illustrations for "How Peter Rabbit Learned to Use His New Coat," depicting Peter Rabbit with white fur. That Cady was aware that cottontails were brown is evidenced by his own character, "Caleb Cottontail," who starred in Cady's 1913 Sunday comic strip "Jolly Jumpers." (See examples at end of this appendix). I would suggest that the explanation for Peter's whiteness lies more in graphic design flexibility and Alice in Wonderland influence than white supremacy, but to the extent that brown rabbits, thanks to Uncle Remus, had become black-coded, the deliberate white-coding of Burgess's lead character remains a possibility.

In 1913, Thornton W. Burgess again showed his ecological prescience, introducing two characters, Paddy the Beaver and Old Man Coyote, whose species were not present in Massachusetts in 1913 but which are now fully integrated members of the local ecosystem. "Old Man Coyote" was not an original name; it was the title of a collection of Native American trickster tales published by Clara Kern Bayliss in 1908. References to the character as "Mr. Wolf" (eliminated in the book versions of the newspaper stories) are based on one of the species's common names, "Prairie Wolf."

Also new to the feature in 1913 were domestic cats: "Thomas," who made a single appearance, and "Black Pussy," who came to stand in for all cats in "Little Stories for Bedtime" going forward. Burgess, during his magazine days, had written two stories for *Good Housekeeping* on the "Cat Question," and maintained a negative view of them, particularly towards those allowed to roam outdoors, in his newspaper story depictions.

Finally, a public talk on November 5, 1913, provides some insight into how Thornton Burgess balanced the role of natural history and the imagination in his storytelling for children. An article in the *Springfield Union* on October 31 suggested that he would "endeavor to explain how he originates the animal characters in his stories and how he makes them differ from other stories of the kind. He will explain his method of making the stories appear peculiarly to children." While the transcript of the talk is not available, it was reported in the *Springfield Republican* (November 6, 1913, page 4) copied in full below:

ANIMAL CHARACTERS IN BOOKS TOLD OF BY THORNTON W. BURGESS

Author of "Bed-Time Stories" Gives Address at Board of Trade in Series, Arranged by Publishers' Co-operative Bureau.

Thornton W. Burgess, creator of animal characters that amuse hundreds of thousands of children every day, as well as a good many of those children's parents, gave a talk on "Animal characters in books" at the board of trade rooms last night, under the auspices of the publishers' co-operation bureau of New York. Mr. Burgess was introduced by Rev. Dr. B. D. Hahn, pastor of the State-street Baptist church, who spoke briefly of the value of books and especially the ownership and constant use of books in character forming. He spoke of the help that Mr Burgess has given to thousands of parents who are forever confronted with the problem of amusing their children and directing their energies in right directions.

The world of the child and the world of the grown-up are distinct and apart, said Mr. Burgess. The one is the realm of imagination, where the impossible becomes probable, where the unreal becomes actual. The other is the world of prosaic fact, stripped of all glamor. The child is ever eagerly looking forward to entering this world and is happily unable to. On the other hand, the adult is continually looking back to the first world, and to some few it is given to return there. Mr. Burgess said that he had been asked many times how he had come to write animal stories. He had always, he said, been interested in animals, especially the more familiar ones of the woods and fields, and he found that animal stories were of great interest to

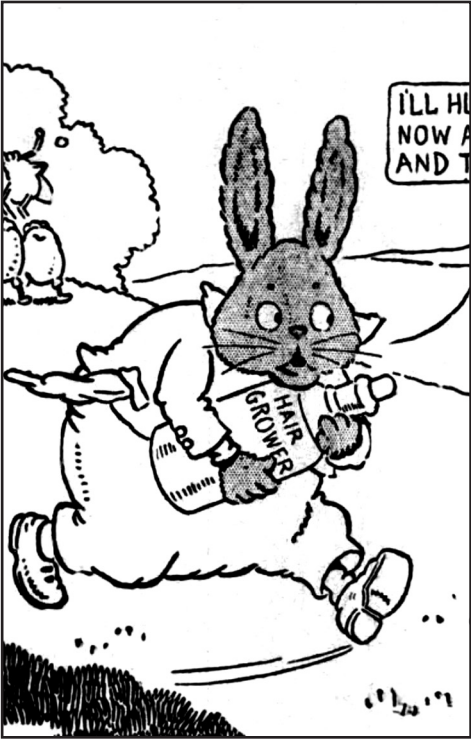
children, as well as instructive, His first stories were written for the amusement of his own son. The best way to instruct a child is to amuse him first and thus gain his interest. The child insists upon the concrete. An animal in a story must be the animal, must have a distinct personality to appeal to the childish imagination. Similarly, a personification of the wind or any other natural force must be given a personal touch.

The child resists and shies at an obvious moral to his stories. But if the moral is buried in the story, he will swallow it absorbedly and ask for more. It is like a sugar-coated pill. Facts of all kinds can be given to the child in such a way as to make a lasting impression if they are given in story form. In that way they are far more effective than any amount of direct teaching.

In all my stories, said Mr. Burgess, in conclusion, I have endeavored to inculcate in my little readers that great humanizing force, love, love of the little animals, friends about them, gained through a knowledge of their lives and habits.



Cover of "Peter Rabbit Learns to Use His New Coat" published in mini-book form in 1928.



"Caleb Cottontail" in panel of Harrison Cady's "Jolly Jumpers," *Ottawa Citizen*, April 26, 1913.

Appendix 3. The Joy of the Beautiful Pine by Thornton W. Burgess

Thornton Burgess, while increasingly famous across North America in 1913, was not as well known in his hometown of Springfield. The *Boston Globe*, it might be remembered, had exclusive rights to the Little Stories for Bedtime feature in New England. This changed somewhat by the end of the year when he wrote a story, “The Joy of the Beautiful Pine,” featuring some of his bedtime story characters, for a booklet designed to help fund the city’s Christmas celebration. Even though the story was published in full by the *Springfield Republican* on December 21, a few days before the celebration, the booklet quickly sold out and needed to be reprinted. This section reprints two articles about the event, the booklet, and Burgess’s role in it, as well as the full story as it appeared in the newspaper. This story would be distributed widely among newspapers in 1915, and would be one of the stories recorded for his record collection in 1918.

***Springfield Daily Republican*, December 22, 1913, page 4**

CITY CELEBRATION PROGRAM

STORY BY T. W. BURGESS PLEASES

PROCEEDS FROM SALE OF COPIES WILL ALL GO TOWARD EXPENSES
OF MUNICIPAL CHRISTMAS TREE

...The chief interest of the booklet...lies in its contents...[T]here is [a] story, “The Joy of the Beautiful Pine,” written by Thornton W. Burgess especially for this program and contributed by him as his share in the municipal Christmas tree enterprise. This story is about the very tree that is now standing in the Court square extension waiting to do its most important part in the celebration, and since the story is written by Thornton W. Burgess, it is of especial interest to children and all grown people who are still young at heart.

It is much to be regretted that there are many people in Springfield who do not know just what nice stories Mr Burgess writes for children. Not many people, for instance, know that a book of his, “Old Mother West Wind,” is used in the lower grades of our schools. His stories appear in many newspapers throughout the country and millions of children watch for them eagerly every day. They are Nature stories, and Mr Burgess has succeeded in making his personifications and his animal characters so live and interesting that the children have come to look upon them as real friends and know and call them by name. In this story in the program Mr Burgess has written one of his best appeals to the child’s interest. It is all about the Christmas tree that grew so big that it couldn’t ever be a Christmas tree in a house and was therefore greatly saddened, for its greatest pleasure was in making little children happy. But then because it was so big and beautiful it was chosen for the city’s Christmas tree, and instead of making two or three children happy it succeeded in making many hundreds happy. That is stated just for grown people. The children want the whole story, and it is the hope of the Christmas tree committees that parents will buy these programs to read to their children before the entertainment so that the children will fully realize that

the tree has been put up for them. Ralph Alden, cashier of the Springfield national bank, has grown so enthusiastic about the story that he has ordered enough of the programs to give one to each child in the home for the friendless. Many other people are getting them to send as remembrances to children other than their own.

Springfield Union, December 24, 1913, page 5

FINAL PLANS FOR CHRISTMAS TREE

PAGEANT WILL BEGIN AT 5 O'CLOCK, WITH ILLUMINATION HALF
HOUR LATER

DEFERRED IF RAINY

FIRST EDITION OF PROGRAM BOOKLET HAS ALREADY BEEN
EXHAUSTED

The souvenir booklet, "Springfield's Christmas Tree," relating to the story of the pageant of 1913, and a children's Christmas tale, "The Joy of the Beautiful Pine," written especially for the children of Springfield by Thornton W. Burgess, author of "Old Mother Westwind," is having a phenomenal sale. The first edition of 3000 copies, received from the printer Saturday, was all gone Monday and 1500 additional copies have been ordered.

Springfield Republican, December 21, 1913, page 41.

FOR THE YOUNG PEOPLE

JOY OF THE BEAUTIFUL PINE

BY THE GREEN FOREST'S EDGE

A CHRISTMAS STORY WRITTEN ESPECIALLY FOR THE CHILDREN OF
SPRINGFIELD

Once upon a time, long, long ago the great ever so great grandfather of Happy Jack Squirrel, whose name was Happy Jack, too, was sauntering along the Crooked Little Path that comes down the hill through the Green Forest. He was happy, very happy, was Happy Jack, which was quite as it should be, for there was everything to make him happy. His sides were fat with the good things he had to eat. He had a beautiful new coat to keep him warm when rough Brother North Wind and Jack Frost had not come yet and Old Mother Nature was still busy preparing the Green Forest for them and urging all the little people who live there to hurry and make ready for them.

The Green Forest was not as green as it had been all summer. Oh, my, no! You see, most of the trees sleep through the winter just as Johnny Chuck does, and they had shaken off their leaves and wrapped all their little buds which, you know, would be next year's leaves, in warm brown blankets which Jack Frost couldn't get through though he pinched his hardest. Only the Pine-trees and the Hemlock-trees and the Spruce trees, which do not sleep, but love the winter just as Peter Rabbit does, kept their green leaves that in spite of the bare brown branches of the other trees no one should ever forget that this was still the Green Forest.

So Happy Jack scampered down the Lone Little Path and pulled over red leaves and yellow leaves and brown leaves to see what he could find under them, and his heart was happy for his stomach was full, and you know a full stomach, unless it be

too full, almost always makes a happy heart. Now as he pulled over the red and yellow and brown leaves his sharp eyes spied a little brown seed. It was a homely little seed which had fallen from a rough pine cone and you and I would very likely not have seen it at all, or if we had we would have thought it of no account. But Happy Jack's eyes sparkled when he saw that homely little brown seed, for he knew that it was very good to eat. Not that he was hungry, Oh, my no! There wasn't room in his stomach for the least teeny, weeny bit more just then. But Happy Jack knew that there might come a time when his stomach would not be so full and then that little brown seed would taste, oh, so good!

"I'll put it away where I can find it when I need it, just as I have put away ever so many other little brown seeds and fat nuts," said Happy Jack to himself, and picked up the little brown seed.

Now Happy Jack's way of putting away things to eat was to hid them in different places instead of putting them all in one place. You see if he should put all in one place someone else might find them and steal them, and then he would have to go hungry. So he hid some in a hollow tree, but a great many he buried under leaves and in tiny little holes which he dug in the ground, some here, some there, knowing that if he couldn't remember just where each one was, his keen little nose would help him find them when he most needed them.

Now he had hidden a great many little brown seeds and fat nuts near the Lone Little Path so when he picked up this particular little brown seed, he decided he would take it somewhere else. Yes, sir, he would take it to some new place. So he scampered along carrying the little brown seed until presently he came to the edge of the Green Forest. He looked this way and he looked that way to see if any one was watching him, and when he was sure that no one was, he ran out a little way from the edge of the Green Forest, dug a tiny hole in the soft, warm earth with his paws, dropped into it the little brown see and covered it carefully.

"There," said he to himself as he scampered back to the Green Forest to see what more he could find, "everyone knows I live in the Green Forest, and no one will think to look out here for things I have hidden."

Old Mother Nature, who knew just what Happy Jack had done, smiled for she also knew that it was more than likely that Happy Jack would forget all about that little brown seed, and if he did, she had a plan to use it herself and Happy Jack had saved her some trouble, for though he didn't know it he had planted it for her. It all came about just as Old Mother Nature had thought it would. Happy Jack never once thought of that particular little brown seed, for he had hidden plenty to eat all the long winter in the Green Forest. So the little brown seed lay just where he had hidden it until gentle Sister South Wind came in the spring and with her soft fingers opened all the little brown blankets of the leaf buds on the trees, which Jack Frost with his hard fingers had been unable to open. Then Old Mother Nature remembered the little brown seed and she awakened a little fairy who was sleeping in the heart of it, and the name of the little fairy was the Fairy of Life.¹

1 Burgess wrote a four-part series of stories titled "The Fairies of Life" for *Good*

So out from the warm earth sprang a tender green shoot which really was a teeny, weeny pine tree. Jolly, round, bright Mr. Sun, looking down from the blue, blue sky, saw it and smiled, and his smile made the teeny, weeny Pine tree very happy, for it warmed the ground and comforted the little roots growing there. Old Mother West Wind, hurrying past on her way to blow the white-sailed ships across the Great Ocean, saw the teeny, weeny Pine tree and sent some of her children, the Merry Little Breezes, to drive up a shower cloud that it might not go thirsty. But no one else saw the teeny, weeny Pine tree, or if they did see it they took no notice of it. Happy Jack Squirrel ran right past and didn't so much as look at it, for he had forgotten all about hiding that homely little brown seed in the ground there. Once Peter Rabbit, nibbling tender sweet clover, nearly nipped off the head of the teeny, weeny Pine tree and didn't even know it.

But nothing really happened to the teeny, weeny Pine tree and it grew and grew and was happy, for it loved jolly, round, bright Mr. Sun and Old Mother West Wind and the Merry Little Breezes and they loved it. So it grew and grew, and when rough Brother North Wind came again he covered it deep with a soft blanket of snow to keep it warm all winter, and

He shouted "Ha, ha!" And he shouted "Ho, ho!
I cover you deep, little tree, with snow!
But the day will come if you grow and grow
When I'll test your strength with a mighty blow."

So the teeny, weeny Pine-tree was kept safe all the long winter, and when gentle Sister South Wind once more came in the spring, the teeny, weeny Pine-tree began to grow again. It grew and grew and grew until it was no longer teeny, weeny, but put out sturdy branches and was very good to look upon, and held its head high, for it was indeed a beautiful young tree. And for a time the young Pine-tree was very, very happy. But after a while it began to feel lonely. All the other Pine-trees were in the Green Forest, and often it could hear them whispering together and it longed to whisper with them and could not, and so it sighed and sighed, and Peter Rabbit passing that way often stopped to wonder what made such a handsome young Pine-tree seem so sad.

But if it couldn't whisper with the other Pine-trees it could grow, and it wasn't long before it could grow, and it wasn't long before it was the handsomest of all the young Pine-trees far and near, for it could spread its broad green branches as far as it would, while the young Pine-trees in the Green Forest were so crowded that they had no room for their branches, and they withered and died until only the tops were green and fair to see. When the young Pine-tree saw this it became more contented and took pride in growing beautiful, and when the birds sought it that they might build their nests in it, and on bitter winter nights Mrs. Grouse and Peter Rabbit found warmth and shelter under its low growing branches, it became happy once more.

So the years passed and the young Pine-tree became bigger than any of its neighbors in the Green Forest and became known as the Beautiful Pine, and was beloved of all the little people of the Green Forest and the Green Meadows, and gave

Housekeeping in 1906 using this conceit.

them shelter and was happy. But it was happiest when little children played under it in the spring and summer, and in the autumn rested beneath its broad branches after a busy morning seeking nuts with the squirrels in the Green Forest. Only in the winter when rough Brother North Wind and Jack Frost had driven the children away was it sad, and then it would sigh and sigh for the happiness of making others happy.

Once every year, long, long after the nuts had been gathered and all the world seemed drear and bare, came merry children and older folk, and with laugh and song and happy shout would cut young Pine-trees and young Hemlock-trees and carry them away. At first the Beautiful Pine had pitied the young trees, but when it saw that it was the possession of these trees that made the children so happy it began to envy them, and when Jack Frost told it of peeping in at many windows and seeing these little trees made beautiful with many lights, and hung with beautiful things to fill the hearts of little children with joy, it sighed more than ever.

“For,” murmured the Beautiful Pine to the kindly stars, “I would gladly give myself to put joy in the heart of just one little child, but, alas! I am too big, I am too big. No little child wants me because I am too big.

So Christmas after Christmas the Beautiful Pine would watch the little trees carried away and would murmur sadly, “I can give Christmas joy to not one little child because I am too big, too big.” And the wandering night wind would carry that sad murmur through all the Green Forest, “I am too big, too big.”

Then one day the snow lay white on The Green Meadows and in the Green Forest, and the Beautiful Pine had watched the little trees for Christmas carried away with laugh and shout, as it had for so many Christmases, came men and horses, and keen axes sent shivers clear to its beautiful top until its proud length lay stretched on the snow. And somehow the Beautiful Pine cared not, for it had so wanted to give joy to just one little child and it was too big, too big. It was carried into a great city, and there in the very heart of the great city the Beautiful Pine was raised until it stood as proudly as it had stood just beyond the edge of the Green Forest, and it was hung with many colored lights until it was quite, quite the most beautiful tree that ever was. And there came not one, but a thousand, little children, and they danced around the Beautiful Pine and laughter was in their eyes, for joy was in their hearts. And they sang and their voices were joyous. And they shouted and their voices were merry. And they cried:—

“It is the most beautiful tree in all the world, for it is our Christmas tree—the Christmas tree of all the children!”

Then was the heart of the Beautiful Pine, planted long, long years ago by the great-great-ever-so-great grandfather of Happy Jack Squirrel, filled with a great joy—the joy of giving, for it had given its greatest gift, the gift of itself, for the joy of many. And the spirit of Christmas, which is love for all mankind, descended upon it as sweet-toned bells chimed “On earth peace, good will toward men,” and the glad voices of a thousand little children cried “Merry, merry Christmas!”

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Index

A

Amphibians

Bullfrog, American (*Lithobates catesbeianus*)

Grandfather Frog 29, 32, 103, 176, 179, 180, 182, 184, 186, 187, 189, 191, 192, 195, 197, 198, 201, 204, 208, 225, 246, 271, 278, 347, 352, 356, 357, 359, 360, 361, 364, 365, 366, 368, 369, 371, 373, 374, 376, 377, 378, 382, 384, 385, 386, 388, 389, 390, 393, 394, 397, 399, 403

Tadpoles 395, 399

Spring peeper (*Pseudacris crucifer*) 101, 102

Toad, American (*Anaxyrus americanus*)

Mr. Toad 29, 278, 346, 366, 368, 369, 371, 392

Treefrog, Gray (*Dryophytes versicolor*)

Mr. Tree Toad 103

Stickytos 278

B

Birds

Blackbird, Red-Winged (*Agelaius phoeniceus*)

Mr. Redwing 176, 179, 180, 352, 369

Mrs. Redwing 176, 352

Redwing the Blackbird 104

Bluebird, Eastern (*Sialia sialis*)

Winsome Bluebird 86, 88, 89, 104, 296

Bobolink (*Dolichonyx oryzivorus*)

Bubbling Bob the Bobolink 104

Chickadee, Black-capped (*Parus atricapillus*)

Phoebe (Tommy Tit's wife) 262, 263

Tommy Tit 45, 48, 74, 261, 262, 270, 271, 276, 283, 337, 456, 457, 461

Chicken (*Gallus domesticus*) 15, 65, 96, 100, 128, 145, 148, 163, 164, 238

Mrs. Feathertoes 71

Mrs. Speckles 71, 153

Crow, American (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*)

Blacky the Crow 18, 82, 175, 227, 230, 241, 246, 278, 307, 308, 379, 421, 432, 434

Duck, American Black (*Anas rubripes*)

Mrs. Quack 7, 11, 102

Goshawk, American (*Accipiter atricapillus*)

Mr. Goshawk 258, 266, 270

Grouse, Ruffed (*Bonasa umbellus*)

Mrs. Grouse 11, 13, 15, 442

Harrier, Northern (*Circus hudsonius*)

Whitetail the Marsh Hawk 33, 84, 109, 110, 118, 137, 245, 360, 361, 374

Hawk, Red-tailed (*Buteo jamaicensis*)

Redtail the Hawk 84, 107, 132, 134, 215, 246, 258, 308, 313, 332, 334, 346, 349, 374, 380, 446, 448, 457, 463, 465

Hawk, Rough-legged (*Buteo lagopus*)

Roughleg the Hawk 16, 21, 22, 41, 42, 47, 84

Heron, Great Blue (*Ardea herodias*)

Longlegs the Heron 355, 356, 357, 358, 360, 361

Jay, Blue (*Cyanocitta cristata*)

Sammy Jay 9, 64, 80, 81, 83, 84, 89, 123, 125, 126, 127, 129, 130, 132, 134, 135, 136, 140, 156, 157, 159, 166, 167, 175, 220, 227, 230, 236, 241, 247, 252, 267, 276, 277, 278, 286, 287, 289, 290, 291, 294, 295, 296, 298, 299, 302, 307, 313, 314, 317, 325, 344, 346, 400, 407, 416, 419, 421, 422, 423, 425, 426, 428, 429, 431, 432, 434, 435, 437, 448, 457, 459, 461, 464, 466

Loon, Common (*Gavia immer*)

Dippy the Loon 205, 208, 211, 217, 273

Mockingbird, Northern (*Mimus polyglottos*) 61

Mistah Mocker 278, 283, 289, 290, 291, 294, 295, 296, 298, 300, 302

Nighthawk, Common (*Chordeiles minor*)

Boomer the Nighthawk 331, 334, 340

Night-heron, Black-crowned (*Nycticorax nycticorax*)

Blackcap the Night Heron 357

Owl, Great-Horned (*Bubo virginianus*)

Hooty the Owl 13, 28, 33, 42, 43, 46, 48, 51, 52, 104, 106, 204, 205, 208, 211, 215, 217, 248, 250, 251, 253, 254, 255, 258, 259, 261, 262, 267, 268, 273, 275, 278, 308, 317, 324, 331, 333, 344, 346

Mrs. Hooty 107

Sparrow, Song (*Melospiza melodia*)

Little Friend the Song Sparrow 104

Swallow, Tree (*Tachycineta bicolor*)

Skimmer the Swallow 43, 296, 346

Veery (*Catharus fuscescens*)

Veery the Thrush 254, 283

Vireo, Warbling (*Vireo gilvus*)

Warbles the Vireo 283

Vulture, Turkey (*Cathartes aura*) 380

Ol' Mistah Buzzard 43, 75, 90, 173, 175, 184, 186, 189, 191, 208, 278, 283

Woodpecker, Downy (*Picoides pubescens*)

Drummer the Woodpecker 107, 278, 285, 286, 288, 289, 290, 293, 294, 295, 297, 298, 299, 300, 450, 461

Mrs. Drummer 286, 288, 289, 290, 297, 299, 300, 450

Wren, House (*Troglodytes aedon*)

Jenny Wren 288, 303, 304, 305, 307

F

Fish

Trout, Brook (*Salvelinus fontinalis*) 182, 183, 184, 395, 406

I

Insects

Bumblebee species

Bumble the Bee 316, 317

M

Mammals

Badger, American (*Taxidea taxus*)

Digger the Badger 90, 134, 161, 208, 217, 228, 245, 278, 308, 421

Bear, American Black (*Ursus americanus*)

Flatfoot the Black Bear 437

Beaver, American (*Castor canadensis*) 192

Paddy the Beaver 198, 199, 200, 201, 204, 392, 393, 394, 396, 397, 399, 400, 402, 403, 407, 410, 411, 412, 414, 415, 416, 419, 420, 422, 424, 425, 428, 429, 431, 432, 433, 435, 437, 438

Paddy the Beaver's mother 399

Cat, Domestic (*Felis catus*)

Black Pussy 269, 389, 450, 452, 458, 461, 464, 466

Thomas 146, 147

Cattle (*Bos taurus*) 150, 254

Chipmunk, Eastern (*Tamias striatus*)

Striped Chipmunk 29, 33, 90, 161, 174, 278, 337, 346, 379, 380, 382, 384, 386, 396, 407, 442, 451, 459

Cottontail, New England (*Sylvilagus transitionalis*) 255, 256

Fuzzy 309, 312, 314, 315, 317, 318, 321, 322, 325, 344

Little Jed 309, 312, 314, 315, 317, 321, 322, 325, 344

Little Pete 309, 312, 314, 315, 317, 320, 322, 323, 324, 326, 328, 329, 330, 331, 333, 334, 335, 338, 339, 340, 342, 343

Miss Fuzzytail/Mrs. Peter Rabbit 259, 260, 262, 264, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 272, 273, 276, 277, 279, 280, 281, 283, 303, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 312, 314, 317, 318, 321, 322, 324, 328, 329, 332, 374, 459

Old Jed Thumper 259, 260, 262, 263, 264, 267, 268, 269, 271, 272, 276, 309, 405

Old Mrs. Rabbit 8

Peter Rabbit 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12, 16, 17, 18, 21, 23, 24, 26, 28, 29, 33, 43, 45, 46, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 55, 56, 57, 58, 83, 84, 85, 88, 89, 90, 92, 93, 95, 96, 98, 100, 101, 102, 104, 106, 109, 117, 118, 122, 141, 144, 145, 147, 149, 150, 153, 158, 161, 162, 169, 170, 171, 172, 175, 205, 207, 208, 209, 219, 228, 241, 242, 245, 246, 248, 250, 251, 252, 254, 255, 256, 258, 260, 261, 262, 263, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 272, 273, 276, 277, 279, 280, 281, 283, 296, 303, 305, 307, 308, 309, 312, 313, 314, 315, 317, 320, 321, 323, 324, 325, 328, 329, 331, 334, 335, 343, 346, 374, 379, 380, 384, 396, 401, 406, 410, 411, 412, 415, 416, 417, 421, 441, 442, 450, 452, 454, 455, 457, 459, 461

Wuzzy 309, 312, 314, 315, 317, 318, 321, 322, 325, 344

Cougar (*Puma concolor*)

Old Twitchtail the Panther 437

Coyote (*Canis latrans*)

Old Man Coyote 207, 217, 220, 223, 224, 226, 227, 228, 230, 232, 233, 235, 238, 241, 242, 244, 245, 246, 248, 250, 252, 258, 261, 271, 272, 278, 280, 281, 307, 308, 346, 400, 417, 419, 420, 422, 423, 424, 426, 429, 430, 431, 435, 438, 439, 441

Dog, Domesticated (*Canis familiaris*) 206, 208, 211, 217, 273

Bowser the Hound 6, 49, 51, 58, 59, 60, 74, 100, 119, 121, 127, 128, 129, 132, 134, 137, 139, 141, 143, 144, 145, 147, 148, 150, 155, 156, 159, 164, 167, 169, 204, 216, 228, 232, 237, 238, 243, 244, 373, 380, 405, 406, 431, 441, 445, 464

Unnamed little dog 118

Fox, American Red (*Vulpes vulpes fulva*) 135

Granny Fox 6, 13, 15, 16, 21, 26, 28, 29, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 42, 43, 45, 47, 48, 51, 55, 58, 60, 85, 89, 99, 122, 134, 137, 143, 209, 222, 223, 224, 226, 227, 232, 233, 235, 236, 237, 238, 241, 243, 244, 245, 247, 248, 250, 252, 253, 258, 273, 278, 279, 280, 306, 313, 318, 325, 328, 329, 331, 334, 346, 405, 420

Reddy Fox 5, 6, 13, 15, 16, 26, 28, 29, 33, 34, 37, 38, 39, 40, 42, 47, 48, 51, 58, 60, 85, 89,

- 91, 92, 93, 95, 96, 99, 107, 117, 125, 126, 127, 129, 132, 134, 137, 141, 161, 162, 163, 164, 175, 204, 207, 208, 209, 210, 213, 214, 216, 219, 220, 224, 228, 229, 233, 235, 237, 238, 241, 242, 244, 245, 247, 248, 250, 252, 253, 258, 267, 275, 278, 279, 280, 297, 298, 299, 303, 306, 307, 308, 313, 318, 325, 328, 329, 331, 333, 334, 344, 346, 350, 351, 374, 396, 405, 410, 417, 421, 441, 445, 463, 465
- Hare, Snowshoe (*Lepus americanus*)
- Jumper the Hare 23, 24, 26, 28, 29, 208, 255
- Horse (*Equus caballus*) 150, 153, 154
- Human, Modern (*Homo sapiens*)
- Farmer Brown 49, 50, 51, 65, 73, 121, 126, 147, 157, 164, 192, 193, 352, 386, 400, 402, 426, 431, 438, 462, 465
- Farmer Brown's boy 15, 20, 22, 49, 56, 57, 59, 60, 63, 66, 67, 69, 71, 72, 73, 74, 76, 77, 78, 94, 95, 96, 99, 100, 103, 121, 127, 128, 129, 132, 137, 139, 140, 143, 144, 146, 147, 148, 149, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 158, 163, 165, 166, 167, 191, 193, 206, 209, 210, 217, 226, 235, 237, 252, 340, 342, 343, 349, 369, 377, 378, 382, 383, 384, 386, 388, 389, 400, 403, 405, 406, 408, 419, 430, 432, 433, 435, 437, 438, 441, 458, 464
- Mrs. Farmer Brown 158
- Lynx, Canada (*Lynx canadensis*)
- Tufty the Lynx 437, 439
- Mink, American (*Neogale vison*) 135
- Billy Mink 12, 13, 18, 30, 31, 33, 98, 158, 161, 182, 184, 186, 187, 189, 191, 193, 195, 197, 198, 208, 223, 228, 229, 246, 278, 353, 356, 357, 359, 365, 390, 393, 394, 402, 404, 407, 415, 442
- Unnamed Mink 31, 32
- Mole, Eastern (*Scalopus aquaticus*)
- Miner the Mole 134
- Mouse, North American Deer (*Peromyscus maniculatus*) 15
- Mouse, White-footed (*Peromyscus leucopus*)
- Whitefoot the Wood Mouse 161, 227, 278
- Muskrat (*Ondatra zibethicus*)
- Jerry Muskrat 16, 17, 18, 29, 30, 32, 85, 88, 102, 104, 158, 161, 170, 174, 175, 176, 179, 180, 181, 182, 184, 186, 189, 191, 192, 195, 196, 197, 199, 200, 201, 204, 208, 228, 246, 271, 278, 353, 358, 359, 361, 365, 370, 371, 374, 379, 390, 393, 394, 396, 402, 404, 407, 410, 411, 412, 414, 416, 428, 429
- Opossum, Virginia (*Didelphis virginiana*)
- Mrs. Possum 63, 66, 74, 78, 88, 90, 156, 278
- Possum children 63, 74, 78, 90
- Unc' Billy Possum 5, 6, 9, 11, 61, 64, 65, 66, 67, 69, 72, 73, 74, 75, 77, 78, 88, 90, 95, 104, 106, 109, 144, 149, 150, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 159, 162, 163, 165, 166, 208, 227, 229, 230, 278, 283, 296, 410
- Otter, North American river (*Lontra canadensis*)
- Little Joe Otter 18, 20, 161, 176, 179, 180, 182, 184, 186, 187, 189, 191, 195, 197, 198, 246, 278, 353, 356, 357, 359, 364, 365, 367, 390, 393, 400, 415
- Porcupine, North American (*Erethizon dorsatum*)
- Prickly Porky 107, 161, 162, 163, 165, 166, 169, 208, 222, 223, 224, 226, 227, 228, 229, 232, 233, 235, 241, 278, 399, 415
- Raccoon, Common (*Procyon lotor*)
- Bobby Coon 5, 6, 88, 90, 109, 161, 173, 175, 208, 211, 213, 227, 229, 230, 278, 396, 410, 416, 440, 441, 446, 449
- Skunk, Striped (*Mephitis mephitis*)
- Grandfather Skunk 5, 6, 11

- Jimmy Skunk 5, 6, 12, 13, 25, 26, 28, 33, 63, 65, 66, 67, 71, 88, 91, 92, 93, 95, 96, 100, 104, 106, 108, 109, 112, 113, 117, 118, 122, 126, 144, 145, 147, 148, 149, 150, 158, 159, 161, 162, 163, 165, 166, 171, 172, 173, 175, 205, 207, 211, 213, 214, 216, 217, 219, 278, 281, 296, 304, 306, 308, 379, 404, 408, 410, 442
- Squirrel, American Red (*Tamiasciurus hudsonicus*)
 Chatterer the Red Squirrel 9, 74, 76, 81, 82, 83, 113, 161, 226, 227, 233, 278, 285, 288, 289, 290, 294, 295, 297, 298, 299, 302, 407, 432, 439, 441, 442, 443, 445, 446, 448, 449, 451, 452, 454, 456, 457, 459, 461, 462, 463, 464, 466
- Squirrel, Eastern Gray (*Sciurus carolinensis*) 135
 Happy Jack Squirrel 33, 75, 77, 78, 88, 117, 158, 161, 170, 190, 213, 227, 232, 236, 278, 379, 396, 407, 442, 445, 448
- Vole, Eastern Meadow (*Microtus pennsylvanicus*) 135
 Danny Meadow Mouse 22, 33, 34, 36, 38, 39, 40, 42, 43, 46, 48, 52, 55, 56, 57, 58, 89, 158, 161, 210, 227, 245, 252, 253, 278, 279, 281, 328, 329, 334, 335, 338, 339, 341, 344, 348, 349, 351, 360, 374, 376, 379, 442
- Weasel species
 Shadow the Weasel 13, 33, 254, 334, 440, 441, 442, 443, 445, 446, 448, 449, 451, 457, 458, 461, 462, 464
- Wolf, Gray (*Canis lupus*)
 Howler the Wolf 437
- Woodchuck (*Marmota monax*) 135
 Chuckie (Baby Chuck) 138, 139, 140, 143, 144, 146, 147, 149, 150, 153, 156, 157, 161, 165, 166, 167, 170
 Gray old Chuck 111, 112, 114, 116, 117, 121
 Johnny Chuck 5, 6, 8, 29, 61, 90, 91, 92, 101, 102, 104, 107, 109, 110, 111, 113, 114, 117, 118, 119, 121, 122, 125, 126, 127, 129, 130, 132, 134, 135, 136, 138, 139, 140, 141, 144, 146, 147, 150, 153, 156, 158, 161, 166, 167, 170, 172, 246, 273, 278, 295, 297, 298, 299, 313, 408, 450, 451, 459
 Little Chucks (Johnny's children) 131, 132, 134, 135, 136, 138, 139, 140, 141, 156, 161, 170, 450
 Mother Chuck 109, 134
 Polly Chuck 114, 118, 119, 121, 123, 129, 131, 132, 134, 136, 140, 141, 156, 161, 170, 273, 278, 408, 450, 451
- Meteorological
 Brother North Wind 22, 28, 30, 33, 41, 61, 71, 80, 89, 101, 317, 396, 414
 Jack Frost 12, 18, 30, 61, 80, 101, 180, 396, 414, 435, 438, 439
 Jolly, round, red Mr. Sun 7, 17, 40, 41, 49, 51, 54, 56, 66, 85, 99, 111, 112, 113, 122, 130, 134, 145, 166, 188, 196, 209, 247, 253, 266, 271, 275, 318, 333, 353, 356, 371, 408, 422, 438, 450, 466
 Merry Little Breezes 111, 116, 122, 130, 171, 173, 174, 206, 210, 217, 226, 230, 236, 238, 247, 277, 312, 318, 328, 339, 352, 356, 360, 367, 371, 377, 378, 380, 384, 386, 388, 400, 420
 Mistress Spring 86, 88, 90, 98, 101, 102, 408, 451
 Mr. North Wind 14
 Mrs. Moon 51, 438
 Night Breeze 321, 324, 325, 326, 329, 330, 331
 Old Mother West Wind 130, 206, 230, 247, 277, 318, 360
 Sister South Wind 86, 88, 89, 90, 98, 191, 408
- Mythological
 Old Mother Nature 5, 7, 83, 91, 117, 132, 135, 259, 268, 334, 356, 435

P

Plants

- Alder species 295, 397, 406, 415
 - Apple (*Malus domestica*) 121, 123, 126, 127, 130, 134, 135, 137, 138, 139, 156, 297, 299, 300, 461
 - Aspen species 415, 416, 419, 422, 423, 425, 429
 - Birch species 254, 255, 261, 263, 415
 - Blackberry species 50
 - Blueberry, Lowbush (*Vaccinium angustifolium*) 264
 - Bulrush species 101, 176, 179, 182, 204, 352
 - Cherry species 254
 - Chestnut, American (*Castanea dentata*) 288, 440, 446, 448, 457
 - Clover species 134, 136, 138, 139, 264
 - Common mullein (*Verbascum thapsus*) 373, 375
 - Dandelion species 114
 - Elm, American (*Ulmus americana*) 114, 116, 120
 - Fern species 254, 259, 260, 262, 266, 267, 268
 - Greenbriar (*Smilax rotundifolia*) 263, 269, 271, 272, 405
 - Hemlock, Eastern (*Tsuga canadensis*) 9, 11, 14, 15, 29, 39, 125, 132, 287, 291
 - Hickory species 30, 31, 32, 85, 161, 182
 - Juniper species 254, 269
 - Maple species 22, 261
 - Peach (*Prunus persica*) 46, 48, 49, 51, 52, 54, 56
 - Pine, Eastern White (*Pinus strobus*) 81, 83, 84, 104, 106, 430, 431, 432, 439, 448
 - Poplar species 223, 226, 276, 396, 415
 - Spruce species 81, 445, 447
 - Sweet-briar Rose (*Rosa rubiginosa*) 276, 277, 307, 308, 309, 312, 316
 - Sweet-clover, White (*Melilotus albus*) 117, 118, 120, 139, 245, 250, 254, 266, 283, 309, 320
 - Violet species 114
 - Wild rose species 54
 - Willow species 397, 415
 - Wind Flower species 114
 - Yellow water lily (*Nuphar variegata*) 30, 31, 178, 182, 352
- Problematic Language
- pickaninny 152

R

Reptiles

- Alligator, American (*Alligator mississippiensis*) 61
- Greensnake, Smooth (*Opeodrys vernalis*)
 - Mr. Green Snake 360
- Snake, Black (*Pantherophis obsoletus*)
 - Mr. Blacksnake 112, 245, 311, 312, 346, 348
- Snake, Eastern Garter (*Thamnophis sirtalis*)
 - Mr. Garter Snake 338, 339, 341, 342, 344
- Turtle, Spotted (*Clemmys guttata*)
 - Spotty the Turtle 182, 184, 186, 187, 188, 190, 191, 195, 196, 198, 201, 205, 278, 366, 367, 390, 392, 393, 394, 395